# GENDER, ISLAM AND DEMOCRACY IN INDONESIA

Kathryn Robinson

ROUTLEDGE

# THE AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY

# Gender, Islam and Democracy in Indonesia

This book explores the relationship between gender, religion and political action in Indonesia, examining the patterns of gender orders that have prevailed in recent history, and demonstrating the different forms of social power this has afforded women. It sets out the part played by women in the nationalist movement, and the role of the women's movement in the structuring of the independent Indonesian state, the politics of the immediate post-independence period and the transition to the authoritarian New Order. It analyses in detail the gender relations of the New Order regime, focused around the unitary family form expounded in New Order ideology and the contradictory implications of the opening up of the economy to foreign capital and ideas for gender relations. It examines the forms of political activism that were possible for the women's movement under the New Order, and the role it played in the fall of Suharto and the transition to democracy. The relationship between Islam and women in Indonesia is also addressed, highlighting the way in which Islam became a critical focus for political dissent in the late New Order period. Overall, this book provides a thorough investigation of the relationship between gender, religion and democracy in Indonesia, and is a vital resource for students of gender studies and Indonesian affairs.

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# Series Editor's Foreword

The contributions of women to the social, political and economic transformations occurring in the Asian region are legion. Women have served as leaders of nations, communities, workplaces, activist groups and families. Asian women have joined with others to participate in fomenting change at micro and macro levels. They have been both agents and targets of national and international interventions in social policy. In the performance of these myriad roles women have forged new and modern gendered identities that are recognizably global and local. Their experiences are rich, diverse and instructive. The books in this series testify to the central role women play in creating the new Asia and re-creating Asian womanhood. Moreover, these books reveal the resilience and inventiveness of women around the Asian region in the face of entrenched and evolving patriarchal social norms.

Scholars publishing in this series demonstrate a commitment to promoting the productive conversation between Women's Studies and Asian Studies. The need to understand the diversity of experiences of femininity and womanhood around the world increases inexorably as globalization proceeds apace. Lessons from the experiences of Asian women present us with fresh opportunities for building new possibilities for women's progress the world over.

The Asian Studies Association of Australia (ASAA) sponsors this publication series as part of its ongoing commitment to promoting knowledge about women in Asia. In particular, the ASAA women's caucus provides the intellectual vigour and enthusiasm that maintains the Women in Asia Series (WIAS). The aim of the series, since its inception in 1990, is to promote knowledge about women in Asia to both the academic and general audiences. To this end, WIAS books draw on a wide range of disciplines including anthropology, sociology, political science, cultural studies and history. The series could not function without the generous professional advice provided by many anonymous readers. Moreover, the wise counsel provided by Peter Sowden at Routledge is invaluable. WIAS, its authors and the ASAA are very grateful to these people for their expert work.

Louise Edwards (University of Technology, Sydney)
Series Editor

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# Introduction—Gender, Islam and Democracy in Indonesia

In February 1998, the 'dying days' of the authoritarian regime of President Suharto, a group of women occupied the roundabout outside the Hotel Indonesia (HI), a hectic road junction on one of Jakarta's busiest streets. The motorists whose passage was impeded were handed roses, packets of milk powder and pamphlets protesting the rising costs of basic commodities consequent on the Asian financial crisis. The protesters singled out the problems faced by women in meeting the basic needs of their families. The group organizing the protest called itself Suara Ibu Peduli (SIP), or the Voice of Concerned Mothers. Their '*demo susu*' (milk demonstration) drew on the central trope of womanhood in the state ideology of Suharto's self-styled New Order regime (1966–98): the wife and mother, whose principal duty as a citizen was to raise a new generation of Indonesians. The *demo susu* attracted extensive publicity, both nationally and internationally, due to its brilliant theatricality and the televised images of the brave but clearly terrified women being dragged off by the police. Their chosen location, outside Jakarta's first modern skyscraper hotel built soon after independence, is redolent with symbolism of the pride and optimism in the nationalist spirit of the post-independence Sukarno presidency (1945–65): it invokes a political memory that is in stark contrast to the ethos of the authoritarian Suharto government. Two of the women arrested, Karlina Leksono and Gadis Arivia, were among the organizers of the demonstration, but the third, Wilasih, was a passer-by who had spontaneously joined the protest. Her action symbolized the extraordinary and immediate appeal the protest had for a wide range of Indonesian women and its powerful engagement with the symbolism of women as mothers that was part of New Order hegemonic ideology.

In the demonstrators' trial, the feminist human rights lawyer Nursyahbani Katjasungkana addressed the failure of the state to protect their human rights. The women used the trial to protest not just the economic crisis but also the 'crisis in trust' in the government, symbolized in the denial of their right to free speech. The trial gained even more publicity for SIP and triggered a spontaneous growth of the organization, including sectors of the population (especially the lower middle class) which had not hitherto been associated with women's activism. Women established local chapters of SIP, setting up *warung sembako* (food kiosks selling the basic commodities at low prices) to help households survive the economic crisis.

The visibility of women on the street in the period of Indonesia's transition to democracy contrasts with their absence from mainstream political analyses. The 'hegemonic' analyses of Indonesian politics, in which a particular kind of liberal discourse is dominant (Philpott 2000), have been called 'gender blind' (Blackburn 1991; Stivens 1991; Taylor 1997a): this criticism reflects the humanist position which presumes the impossibility of addressing politics, and especially democratization, while not taking account of the agency and interests of over half of the population. However, the absence of gendered analysis in the mainstream political analyses of the New Order also has more serious implications. Many women scholars have analysed the gender policies of the New Order (see, for example, Robinson 1994; Sunindyo 1996; Suryakusuma 1996). However, this book is the first interpretation of Indonesian politics that is fully informed by modern gender theory that analyses gender relations as an aspect of the exercise of power in society. Women's active political participation to shape the nation's gender order is an important part of this story, which locates contemporary Indonesian gender politics in a wider frame of gender activism on a global scale (Connell 2002). I am especially concerned to analyse the gender politics of Suharto's New Order and the period of Reformasi that succeeded it.

The 'gender relations' perspective adopted in this book leads us to enquire into the generalized social and political effects of the unitary 'gender regime' which was a construct of New Order ideology, not just the immediate consequences for 'women as a group'. How significant were gendered structures of power in strategies for managing the population under the steadily gathering authoritarian character of the New Order? What are the implications of women's challenges to the gender regimes of successive state formations for the reconfiguration of power relations, for example, in the context of regime change?

Indonesia has a population of 217 million, of whom around 80 per cent profess Islam. The poetic invocation of the idea of nation is 'land and sea' (*tanah air*) and the population is scattered across more than 17,000 islands that span the equator, divided among over 700 language groups that were forged into a modern nation state over several hundred years of gradual expansion of Dutch colonial rule, which ended in 1945. This book begins with an anthropological analysis of the diverse gender orders in the archipelago. A 'gender order', using Jill Mathew's (1984) term, is a historically constructed pattern of power relations between men and women and a definition of femininity and masculinity. The term has been used by Connell (1987; 2000; 2002) to refer to the 'structural inventory of a society' in regard to gender relations. I utilize the framework developed in the work of R. W. Connell in which the overall patterning of gender relations within an institution, termed 'the gender regime', is analysed across a range of structures, analytically distinguished as power relations, production relations, emotional relations and gender symbolism. In the analysis of a broad social field such as the Indonesian nation, there are many gender regimes, which can be collectively understood as the gender order, the 'overall patterning of gender regimes, together with the gender patterning of a culture and personal life. . . . It is implicit in these concepts that gender regimes

and gender orders are historical products and subject to change in history' (Connell 2000: 29).

The localized gender orders of the constituent cultures of the archipelago manifest transformation through, *inter alia*, the progressive influence of world religions—particularly Islam which has been slowly penetrating the archipelago since about the eleventh century—and the later impact of colonialism and global capitalism. This book analyses the relevance of the contemporary Islamic revival to gender politics in the country with the world's largest Muslim population during the Reform period (termed Reformasi) that succeeded Suharto's New Order in 1998.

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The *demo susu* was the first in a series of protests that culminated in the occupation of the Indonesian parliament building in May 1998, following the murder of student protesters by the Indonesian military (Forrester 1999). SIP was again at the forefront. Some members had acted as ambulance drivers during confrontations between protesters and state military/police ferrying casualties to hospital, mirroring one of the roles women played in the nationalist struggle of the 1940s. They soon found themselves enacting a more maternal role, though not one encompassed by the New Order 'duty statements' for women. A shipment of fast food of unknown provenance was delivered to the occupying students, evincing fears that the government might be fighting their opponents with contaminated food. SIP members took over the role of catering for the protesters, with food supplied from domestic kitchens from homes all over Jakarta.

Sections of the regime responded to the populist challenge to their power by instigating riots in Jakarta, targeting Chinese Indonesians who were scapegoated for the economic misery of the financial crisis. During the May 1998 riots, women of Chinese descent were systematically raped. The report of the rapes precipitated public outrage and led to subsequent revelations of the 'public secret' of rape as an instrument of war that had been used against civilian populations in East Timor and Aceh. The public façade of the normative paternalism of the New Order was stripped away to reveal the violent militarized masculinity at its core.

While many analyses of the events surrounding his fall have been published, little has been written about the active roles women have played in the democracy movement and the shift in gender politics after the fall of Suharto. International Women's Day, Human Rights Day and the International Day against Violence against Women have all been marked by mass demonstrations by women across the country in the Reform era. Indonesia's own national days for celebrating women as citizens (Kartini Day and Mother's Day), used by the New Order to celebrate official ideologies of womanhood, have also been reinstated as symbols of women's rights in a modern nation through street demonstrations.

In May 2006, another signature demonstration happened on the streets of Jakarta: protesters displaying symbols of Islam marched in support of a draft bill ostensibly banning pornography and '*pornoaksi*' (the term coined to mean perpetrators of a pornographic act)—which they saw as a legacy of the opening of Indonesia to the West under the New Order. The (predominantly male) crowds were responding to a demonstration that had been organized by women's groups in April (on Kartini Day) in protest at the bill, which contains clauses that criminalize women's body movements and display of body parts, restrict women's freedom of movement and police moral behaviour. The demonstration brought into sharp focus the contestation over gender relations—a 'battle over the female body' (Chandrakirana 2006)—that has opened up in the wake of the New Order. Islamism has been associated with claims to reinstate men's prerogatives in marriage in regard to polygamy and divorce.

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How have gender relations been affected by the specifically gendered identities proffered by the state, and by the limitations and opportunities for women arising as a consequence of non-gender specific policies? This book addresses the shifting struggles over gender relations in the context of Indonesian history and culture. A characteristic of these 'gender wars' is the assertion by powerful groups of the 'naturalness' of particular (unitary) structures of gender relations. Chapter 1 draws on the anthropological literature to characterize the range of gender orders of the archipelago that offer differing opportunities and restrictions for women and men in the conduct of their daily lives. I identify variations in the structuring of gender relations across the archipelago, encompassing kinship and marriage, inheritance, economic relations, the exercise of power and gender symbolism. What sources of power have been available to women in the varied gender orders of the archipelago? How have these gender orders been impacted by world religions—in particular Islam which has been gradually deepening its presence in the archipelago since around the fifteenth century? Islam has been largely ignored in the scholarly analyses of gender relations in the Indonesian archipelago, and is not highlighted in several of the major review essays (Errington 1990; Sears 1996a). This analysis of diversity in gender relations provides a background from which to engage in the struggles over gendered power that characterize the New Order and Reform periods. Masculinity is political, in the sense of 'the struggle for scarce resources, the mobilization of power and the pursuit of tactics on behalf of particular interests . . . [and] . . . when the historical conditions for a strategy's success have altered, the hegemonic form of masculinity is vulnerable to displacement by other forms' (Connell 1993: 603).

Chapter 2 further sets the scene by investigating the historical roots of contemporary contestation of gender relations. How has women's activism shaped the political forms of the Indonesian nation? As in many nationalist movements, the Indonesian movement was marked by the emergence of a subjectivity of 'woman' (Jayawardena 1986). This happened in the context of the 'national

awakening' in the early twentieth century—the stirring of consciousness of post-enlightenment ideals which came via modernist Islam (following the opening of the Suez Canal) as well as through European colonial influence. How was the field of gender relations encompassed in anti-colonial discourse: did fractions of the nationalist movement (for example, secular nationalists and Islamic nationalists) express competing visions of the idealized gender order for the new nation? Did the politics of nationalism recognize the modern political arena as an important site for struggles over gender relations? By the early twentieth century, urban Indonesian women were organized to challenge the 'patriarchal dividend', the benefits that flow to men as a group from the unequal gender order (Connell 2002: 142), for example, in demands for state intervention in family law and support for women's education.

The New Order has been characterized as a 'repressive-developmentalist' regime (Feith 1980) that pursued capital-induced development (*pembangunan*) through its combination of a militaristic command structure and engagement with the global economy. *Pembangunan* was a 'dominating keyword' of New Order economic policy, with implications of reconstruction and modernization, social engineering and the utilization of state power for order and stability (van Langenberg 1986: 19). Gender relations came into the ambit of its social engineering. In a manner typical of authoritarian regimes, the New Order promoted a normative vision of women's primary role as wife and mother, taking her place in a family in which the husband wielded patriarchal authority. Chapter 3 sets out a pivotal argument of the book, discussing the ideological project of the New Order to inculcate a unitary national model of domesticated femininity based on women's *kodrat* (biologically ordained role) and associated with the presumed natural patriarchy of the family. What is at stake here goes beyond the politics of men as a group versus women as a group: the presumed natural sexual hierarchy of the family with a core of patriarchal authority provided the ideological rationale for the Suharto regime. A violent and militaristic form of hegemonic masculinity was linked to the exercise of power in general. The naturalized authority of the father normalized the authoritarian power of the state, with President Suharto at its centre, with his self-appellation as Bapak Pembangunan—the Father of Development.

The unravelling of this gender regime is a critical aspect of democratization and political reform. 'State power is a resource for the struggle for hegemony in gender, and hegemonic masculinity is a resource in the struggle for state power' (Connell 2002: 105). The New Order gender regime with its inherent hierarchical vision and offer of a patriarchal dividend to men by their privileged position in the family was contrapuntal to the democratic and gender equity goals that emerged in the nationalist movement, and the social, cultural, economic and political diversity expressed in gender regimes throughout the archipelago.

The New Order 'command structure' was successful in delivering some material changes in gender relations. The windfall profits from oil price rises in the mid-1970s were in part used to expand health and education services, with the building of primary schools and health centres. Under presidential instruction,

schools were built in remote villages, and teachers were trained to staff them. A minimum of six years of compulsory schooling was introduced in 1973, resulting in a dramatic increase in school participation rates; by 1995, the number of boys and girls aged 7–12 years in primary school increased from 83 per cent in 1980 to 94 per cent. Literacy rates improved to 78 per cent for females (89.6 per cent for males) by 1995.

Improved access to health services was reflected in lower infant mortality rates, which almost halved in the period 1976–95, from 109 per 1000 births to 55 per 1000 births. Maternal mortality has remained high however, indeed the highest in Southeast Asia, reported as 350 per 100,000 pregnant mothers in 2007 (Bernama.com 2006).

Chapter 4 explores the transformative effects of New Order economic policy on work. What were the impacts of the opening-up of Indonesia to the economic and cultural flows of global capitalism, including its constitutive gender regimes? Were there tensions between the reworking of the gender relations of production by international capital and global labour flows and the ideological fashioning of gender relations in the service of authoritarian power? The opening-up of the economy also exposed Indonesians to a high volume of 'cultural flows' (music, TV, films and Internet) which included ideas about the symbolic expression of gender and ideals of personal self-fulfilment through romantic love. What has been the impact of these new ideas on the expression of gender difference, including sexuality, and are new cultural forms accommodated in the hegemonic definitions of the state gender regime? What are the impacts of the state's own reconfiguration of sexuality through the family planning programme, which has broken the connection between sex and reproduction? These questions will be addressed in Chapter 5.

While the idea of the wife and mother was a pivotal aspect of the emphasized femininity (Connell 1987) of the New Order, and impacted on gender identities, in the later decades of the regime, grass-roots organizations protesting or working against the dominant ideologies began to emerge. Chapter 6 focuses on the political mobilization of women in challenging the way in which the New Order state exercised gendered power. Women's organizations championed different visions of the feminine, including demands for women's rights both in the domestic sphere and in public life, such as in the workplace and in political movements. Did challenges to hegemonic masculinity and the 'patriarchal dividend' that Indonesian men enjoyed feed into the growing democratic challenge to the regime? Where did women find 'democratic space' for political action under the New Order? The symbol of the mother, usurped by the regime, has resonance throughout the archipelago and has been taken up in counter-hegemonic discourse to provide a powerful pole of opposition to the corrupt and violent Suharto regime. Budianta (2002) discusses the appeal of the figure of the *ibu* (mother) struggling to provide for her family under difficult circumstances: this was able to 'touch and move' the people during the 1998 protests. She quoted women expressing their opposition to the state's brutal crushing of student protest: 'we cannot forget we nursed our children'. This chapter

discusses the contribution of the political activism of women's groups to the democratic transition to Reformasi.

Does Reformasi promise women a greater role in public life? Has the new political regime been able to respond to long-standing demands for the state to protect women in the private world of the family? The civil conflict and sectarian violence surrounding the demise of the Suharto era was marked by sexual violence against women. The disclosing of the past public secret of state violence has extended to a discussion of the once-hidden issue of domestic violence and demands for greater state protection of women. Anti-violence demonstrations often take a form that evokes the *demo susu*: women peacefully take over a major intersection and distribute flowers and pamphlets to motorists and passers-by. Thus the civic protest that has characterized this period has embraced a direct critique of the forms of hegemonic masculinity that characterized the authoritarian and militaristic New Order, and underpinned its grip on the state. At the level of official discourse, since Reformasi, the New Order idea of guidance (*pembinaan*) has been substituted by the notion of empowerment (*pemberdayaan*), but this rhetorical shift has not yet been widely manifested in the practice of politics.

Islam provides an important theme in this book, from its relation to *adat* (custom/tradition) in fashioning the gender orders of the archipelago, its role in the contestations of the nationalist movement on the form of the independent polity, and its emergence as a critical pole of debate about gender relations in the post-Suharto era. Islam inflects not only the conduct of everyday life in the gender orders of the archipelago but also the conduct of politics. Nowhere was this clearer than in the public debate over whether or not Megawati Sukarnoputri, the leader of the party that won the largest share of votes in the 1999 elections, had the right to be president. The debate about the possibility of a woman president for a majority Muslim nation was a precursor of new phenomena in Indonesian politics: arguments deriving from textual interpretations of Islam are now routinely invoked in public debates about gender relations. Chapter 7 addresses Islamism that has emerged as a political force since the fall of Suharto. Islam is associated with both claims for a renewed patriarchal dividend for Indonesian men, represented by demands for withdrawal of the state from the regulation of the private world of family, and an invigorated feminism which locates its roots in a humanist and cosmopolitan version of Islam. What are the emergent claims for masculinity and femininity associated with the contestation over political Islam? What are the roots of the new forms of Islamic feminism that are emerging to counter the claims for a conservative Islamic masculinity?

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Changes in gender relations and gendered forms of power in Indonesia are interpreted in this book through contemporary gender theory, and also feminist debates which increasingly inform the critical voices of Indonesian women who have been in continuous dialogue with global feminisms for well over a century. R. W. Connell's (1987; 2000; 2002) framework for understanding the relation

between gender and the exercise of power has been fundamental to my approach. Constructions of masculinity and femininity are critical in understanding expressions of gender and sexuality, work and migration and gender symbolism. Women's demands on the state are a principal focus of this book, drawing on feminist theorizing of citizenship and political rights. The writings of Islamic feminists, principally from the Middle East, have been available in translation in Indonesia in recent years, and have been very influential in public debates in Indonesia. These works are critical to an analysis of Islam and gender politics in contemporary Indonesia.

The empirical material in this book draws on my anthropological research over 30 years, mostly in the province of South Sulawesi, as well as a wide range of published sources, principally in English and Indonesian. They range from scholarly works (from anthropology and history but also economics, politics and cultural studies) to official publications, biographies, political writings, newspaper reports and diverse material posted on the World Wide Web.

My initial research location was the mining community of Soroako (see, for example, Robinson 1983; 1986; 1998b), one of the first foreign investment projects contracted under Suharto's New Order. As a site of such a lengthy, direct and intense encounter with New Order development policy, the experiences of the people of Soroako exemplify the intersecting influences of politics, economy and culture on gendered forms of power. While my primary motivation for choosing Soroako as a research site was the opportunity it provided to explore the social, cultural and economic transformations associated with a major 'development' project, my own interest in feminist politics and the intellectual challenge of feminist critiques of anthropology current at the time, sharpened my awareness of gender relations. My use of anthropology's principal research method, participant observation, had the effect of inserting me as a young unmarried woman within the community and this was the primary social location from which I experienced social relations (although as an educated foreigner, there were significant ways in which my relationships differed from those of other young women, for example I was invited into male 'public' space at ritual events and also had free range of the more intimate female spaces). I draw extensively on my research in Soroako in this book. I taught in the provincial university, Universitas Hasanuddin, in 1984–5, during which time I supervised diverse postgraduate field research projects throughout South Sulawesi. Subsequent to this, I have continued researching in the provincial capital Makassar and its peri-urban fringe, and since 2002, the island of Buton in Southeast Sulawesi. Using the interpretive approach of anthropology, fieldwork encounters with the everyday lived experiences of Indonesian people provide the framework within which I interrogate the analysis of other scholars. As a consultant for development projects (on gender relations and community development issues), since 1989 I have worked throughout the archipelago (including Java, Bali, Kalimantan, Ambon, Lombok and parts of Nusa Tenggara Timor). In this role, I am required to manage the interface between the development discourse of the international aid world, in which a 'gender perspective' is now mandated by donors, and local understandings and practices. This

experience has allowed me to broaden my anthropological and locally grounded knowledge to encompass the operations of government policies (see, for example, Robinson and Raharjo 2000), and the gender politics of the educated middle class. In my academic position at The Australian National University, I have had the pleasure of supervising postgraduate students, many of whom are scholars and activists from Indonesia who are involved in forging the new political discourses and practices of Reformasi. I have built professional and personal connections with some remarkable women scholars and activists, including Khofifah Indar Parawansa, Nursyahbani Katjasungkana, Saparinah Sadli, Mely Tan, Mayling Oey-Gardiner, Lies Marcoes, Lily Munir, Yulfita Raharjo, Melani Budianta, Ciciek Farha, Nurul Ilmi Idrus and Zohra Andi Baso.

This book charts the changes in gender relations in Indonesia throughout the twentieth century, and the new challenges women are facing at the beginning of the twenty-first century—a time when political reform in Indonesia has held out hopes for radical change. The issues of Indonesian identity, an Indonesian nation and Indonesian citizenship have been problematized since the fall of Suharto. His regime was marked by an official certainty about these categories, and the state had a solid regulatory hand in producing apparently coherent meanings of these terms. Cultural and spiritual identities were also managed to produce authorized definitions. I address the intersection of gendered identities with other forms of self-recognition, including citizenship. Violence and conflict still dominate the everyday lives of people in many parts of the archipelago. In the reform period, women are directly challenging the dominant definition of their citizenship as wives and mothers, the circumscribed definitions of women's social roles that were the core of the gender regime of the New Order, and making demands for a greater role in public life. The future direction of the nation is still uncertain, but women are struggling on the political front to influence the direction of change. A new front has emerged in their fight against patriarchal politics, in the form of a renewed masculinity regime championed by conservative Islamic groups.

The central political vision of the New Order grew out of one strand of politics in the Indonesian nationalist movement. The reform movement hoped to transcend the authoritarian stance with an approach arising from the more democratic and egalitarian mode. This alternative strand had dominated the early years of the independent republic when it aspired to become a democratically governed nation, based on the sovereignty of the people. I argue that this was a vision shaped by men and women that incorporated a commitment by many of them (men and women) to gender equity in the political realm. The demands for reform to extend to gender relations in contemporary politics are thus not something new, but have their historical roots in the genesis of the Indonesian nation.

# 1 Gender Diversity in Indonesia

## Introduction

In its wielding of authoritarian power, Suharto's New Order adopted policies intended to control expressions of difference and homogenize the diverse peoples of the Indonesian archipelago. An ideology of sex categories based on biology (at least in the case of women) and the promotion of a unitary women's role were fundamental to the organicist political ideology of the New Order, founded on the idea of the state as a 'family system' which valorized the 'natural rule' of the father (see Chapter 3). The regime placed limits on the possibilities for women's social participation and political agency through state-sponsored practices organized around a dominant trope of woman as wife and mother and the notion of women's social roles being based on their biological nature, expressed through the concept of *kodrat wanita*.[1] In Indonesian, the Arabic-derived term *kodrat* connotes 'God's will' or 'God's omnipotence', with the related meaning of 'the power of nature' and 'nature or character' (Echols and Shadily 1983). In terms of its use in New Order ideology, *kodrat wanita* (*wanita* meaning woman) can be glossed as 'woman's social role that is pre-ordained by her biological (especially reproductive) capacities'. This ideal took its place in the state ideology, the *azas kekeluargaan* or family foundation. The family trope, as a model for authority relations within the state, 'sanctions social hierarchy within a putative organic unity of interests. Since the subordination of woman to man and child to adult [is] deemed a natural fact, other forms of social hierarchy [can] be depicted in familial terms, to guarantee social difference as a fact of nature' (McClintock 1993: 64). State discourse also framed an officially sanctioned masculinity, organized around the idea of men as household heads who represented the inner world of the household in the outer world of public life, but the state did not frame masculinity in terms of *kodrat*—which occasionally leads women to pose the question: Why is it that only women have *kodrat*?[2]

Constructions of gender difference invoking biological specificities are common in ideologies that 'naturalize' differential gender power, substituting ideology for history. Political debate concerning gender in Indonesia commonly makes reference to natural sex roles or 'traditional' differences between men and women: 'It has always been thus'. The rich corpus of ethnographic studies of the

Indonesian archipelago tells us otherwise. The state imperative of homogeneity was imposed on the varied gender orders of its cultures. These present a variety of ways of conceptualizing the relation between sexed bodies and gendered social relations, and also have offered women and men diverse forms of autonomy and dependence. The ethnographic record tells us that much of what is asserted as 'traditional' gender roles in contemporary debates is 'invented tradition', asserting dominant forms of masculinity in the service of exercising political power.

The rich anthropological literature of the Indonesian archipelago provides a standpoint from which to question universalizing assumptions about gender difference, in both Western scholarship and New Order gender ideology. This chapter begins with a discussion of variety in Indonesian gender orders, understood through the manner of the regulation of marriage, fertility and sexuality, as well as property and inheritance—practices that express differential male and female power. These practices are associated with varying forms of gendered personhood, including the gender structure of emotional attachment or 'cathexis' which involves 'prohibition and incitement' of appropriate sexual partners (Connell 1987: 111–12) linked to arrangements for reckoning kinship and negotiating marriage. Diverse forms of male and female agency are manifest in the gender orders of the archipelago. The second section of this chapter investigates the imbrications of Islam and *adat* (custom, tradition) in three Islamic regions of the archipelago for which we have at least half a century of ethnographic accounts. History fractures the idea of a single 'tradition' of gender relations. The final section returns to the high level of involvement of women in the economy, and the manner in which this intersects the symbolic construction of gender. There is an oft-repeated assertion of women's higher status in Southeast Asia (see, for example, Reid 1988) relative to other parts of the world. Errington (1990) proposes that this suggestion of 'high status' is a consequence of the surprised response of early European travellers to the high profile of Southeast Asian women in economic life in comparison with European women. The diversity and complexity presented in this chapter represents a critique of the politics of domination through the assertion of homogeneity and 'tradition' in gender practices, a feature of both New Order and contemporary Islamist gender politics.

## Diverse gender orders

Anthropological accounts engage with many of the areas of social life that manifest the varied gender orders of the archipelago, notably ethnographic studies of kinship practices, marriage and residence arrangements, inheritance and symbolic systems in which a gender binary is central (the latter especially marked in eastern Indonesia). Kinship, marriage and inheritance have been analyzed as aspects of *adat* or custom in this literature. It is difficult to distinguish *adat* as an autonomous or originary domain of social practice due to the impact of world religious traditions—in particular Islam but also Christianity, and to a lesser extent, Hinduism—and other historical influences including colonialism

and global capitalism. Such 'cultural flows' have profoundly influenced the conceptualization of gender differences.

Ethnographic accounts of some Indonesian societies challenge the presumed naturalness of the sex–gender distinction (that is, the 'rule of thumb' that sex is a manifestation of biology whereas gender is a category of culture) used in feminist anthropology and in feminist theory in general—which Yanagisako and Collier have argued is a pervasive ethnocentrism (Moore 1994: 12). The idea that there are essential differences between sexed bodies is a novel concept in some parts of the archipelago. Writing about the Wana of Central Sulawesi, Atkinson (1990) describes their fluid notion of the relation between a sexed body and the performance of masculine/feminine social roles. Gender differences are understood as a continuum, not a dichotomy. The Kodi on the island of Sumba in eastern Indonesia consider that 'each person has elements of both sexes in a residual pattern, but that with adequate social conditioning he or she can make a successful adjustment to the appropriate gender identity' (Hoskins 1990: 303). That is, 'We are all born with human potential that mixes male and female attributes, but we must learn to become individual men and women' (p.304).

These accounts underscore that we cannot assume that in all times and places, biological sex differences are understood on a binary model that provides the universal basis for the cultural categories 'male' and 'female' (Moore 1994: 13). However, we can see that it is not just feminist anthropology but also the architects of New Order state ideology who have instantiated such a binary through the idea of '*kodrat*'.

## Kinship and gender relations

> Gender is the structure of social relations that centres on the reproductive arena, and the set of practices (governed by this structure) that bring reproductive distinctions between bodies into social processes (Connell 2002: 10).

Anthropology has dealt with concerns about reproduction and associated social process through the study of kinship. Traditional approaches to this field of study focused on understanding formal structural principles, using variations in forms of reckoning kinship and descent as ways of classifying and comparing societies. For mid-twentieth-century anthropology, kinship theory rested on a dichotomy between the 'domestic' and the politico-jural or 'public' domains (for example, kinship-based organizations like 'clans'), the latter considered as the province of male social actors and to have greater importance in characterizing a society, and in organizing social life. Many ethnographic accounts written from this perspective depict kinship through the operation of formal systems. However, the second-wave feminist critiques of anthropology argued that this dichotomy is based on a Euro-American folk model in which reproduction—the core of the 'domestic'—is conceptualized as essentially sexual and the distinction between domestic and public spheres is considered 'natural' (MacCormack and Strathern 1980).

Systems of reckoning descent, residence customs, marriage practices and inheritance are fundamental to the form of a gender order. However, post-feminist and post-structuralist approaches and 'practice' theories of social action originating with the work of Pierre Bourdieu (1977) have opened the way to a new approach in kinship studies with a reorientation towards theories concerning choosing social actors and the strategies they employ in everyday life, and the impacts of the interweaving of personal life and social structure on what people do by way of constituting their lived social relations (Connell 1987: 61). Such an approach does not focus principally on formal models of systems, but is concerned with how kinship practices frame individual experience and the capacity of men and women to make choices concerning their own lives and those of others (Dube 1996). It focuses on interpersonal relations and personal identity expressed in social practices associated with kinship and marriage. Relations defined in terms of kinship are not just expressions of rules but also the grounding for structures of feeling. The challenge is to 'work out what bearing social and cultural discourses have on individual experience' (Moore 1994: 16) and the manner in which social experience and emotional life are discursively constituted. . . . That is, understanding formal juridical principles is only one aspect of the social practice of kinship. A focus on everyday social practice enables understanding of the 'relation between gender as performed and the symbolic construction of gender . . .' (Moore 1994: 24).

Marriage relations are personal as well as being relations between groups or categories of kin. Significant in understanding gender relations are the 'prohibition and incitement' of attraction to appropriate sexual partners (Connell 1987: 111–12). The feminist reappraisal of kinship studies leads us to a focus on gender as it is lived and constructed in social life. Gender identities emerge in the context of the matrix of social relationships, not as the expression of essential attributes of individuals (Moore 1994: 39).

In terms of the principles of ordering kinship and marriage relations across the archipelago, the numerically dominant form is 'ego-centred bilateral kinship [reckoning descent through both maternal and paternal lines] with variations in its inclination towards matrilineality [reckoning descent in the female line through the mother] and matrilocality [living with the wife's kin]' (Dube 1996: 7; see also Errington 1990). The bilateral pattern is found, for example, in the Javanese and Sundanese, and the peoples of South Sulawesi. That is, each individual ('ego') can be located in a web of kin relations extending through both parental lines, as well as through their own descendants. In such social orders, male and female lines are of equal import in terms of reckoning relatedness, and frequently in regard to inheritance. Even the famous 'exceptions', the supposedly matrilineal Minangkabau, the patrilineal (descent traced through ancestors in the male line)—or at least patrivirilocal (living with the husband's paternal kin)—Balinese and the self-avowed patrilineal Acehnese, have been attributed with strong bilateral and matrifocal (economically and emotionally centred on the mother) tendencies by a number of scholars. Unilineal (matrilineal and patrilineal) systems generally give rise to kin groups based on the descent line (for example the patrilineal Batak and matrilineal Minangkabau), a formation that is

not possible in a bilateral system. Such kin groups often control marriage and inheritance. I will argue below that bilateral systems as a framework for social relationships open up a space for social practices that allow agency to women, especially in comparison to societies practising patrilineal descent and patrivirilocal residence.

At the level of everyday social relations, how do the arrangements consequent on ways of reckoning kin relations impact on gender power, and on male and female personhood? The kin terminological systems in the bilateral societies of the archipelago tend to stress differences of generation,[3] while gender is not always terminologically distinguished. That is, in everyday interactions, people are referred to by terms meaning 'sibling, cousin, grandparent and grandchild', which are often not gender specific. For example, the Bugis of South Sulawesi use one term for all relatives of the same generation as oneself (*seajing*), distinguishing only between those older (*kaka*) and those younger (*anri*). Terms for ascending and descending generations—nieces and nephews (*ana'* or *ana'-ure*), grandchildren (*ana' eppo*)—are similarly not distinguished on the basis of sex (Pelras 1996: 153).[4] In the language spoken in Soroako, South Sulawesi (the site of my long-term field research), there is only a single term for spouse (*kombia*). This is in contrast to state-promoted terminologies that emphasize gender relationships within the household as primary. Thus, the naming practices of state discourses of gender are at variance with the vernacular discourses that 'regulate/constitute/represent people's experience of gender' (Moore 1994: 4). Terms indexing generation are expressed in family relations through the idealized role of the older brother informing the role of the husband/father. Men are frequently referred to by terms meaning 'older brother', by their wives.[5] The concern for birth order, as well as the emphasis on generation in kin relations, reflects the concern for precedence that characterizes the expression of hierarchy in the archipelago (Fox 1996).

Until the last few decades, in most societies throughout the archipelago, marriages were the subject of arrangements between kin, for both men and women (but with wide variance in the degree to which such arrangements allowed expression of will by the bride and/or groom). Marriage was about reproduction but also about regulating and affirming status relations between social groups—or indeed as a way of improving social honour (see, for example, Keeler 1990; Millar 1983). Discussing a failed marriage arrangement in Java, Keeler (1990) comments that for the parents, the avoidance of shame was a primary concern. These societies share a fundamental concern with how one establishes affinal ('in-law') relationships: marriage takes its social significance in regulating relations between groups. In Bugis, for example, the term for marriage *siala* can be translated as 'to take each other', and refers to the new alliance between the two 'sides' (Idrus 2003: 88).[6]

This is very different from the assumptions in contemporary Western societies about the nature of marriage, understood as a quintessentially personal relationship grounded in romantic love and passion. In Soroako in the 1970s, the practice of arranged marriage carried assumptions about the relation between marriage and passion. A desirable spouse was not evaluated in terms of

romantic feelings, rather parents weighed up the attributes of the prospective spouses in regard to forming an independent household and linking families (often already related) as well as having an eye to maintaining or improving social standing. Personal attributes were also important. 'Our parents love us and so want to do the best for us', a Soroakan woman commented to me, in regard to arranged marriages. The assumption is that a passionate attachment will develop after the wedding ceremony.

Marriage in Soroako was followed by uxorilocal residence—the newly wed couple residing with the bride's kin—before the newly-weds established an independent household. Usually the youngest daughter inherited her parents' house, on the understanding that together with her husband, she would live in it with her parents and care for them as they aged. Commonly, a son-in-law worked with his wife's kin, for example, working his parents-in-law's land, and a woman became an intimate associate of her sisters-in-law, usually already regarded as kin, because of the preference for marrying someone who can be regarded as a cousin.

Uxorilocal residence after marriage is also practised by the matrilineal Minangkabau. The consequence of this practice is that after the wedding, it is the new husband who is the stranger, who creeps around self-consciously, while the wife lives life almost as before, in the home where she has always lived. Sanday (2002: 115) suggests that the symbolic exchanges between women who give and take husbands indicate that 'women are the ones who manage the circulation of real and symbolic male fertility'. The husband is likened to a rooster who is brought to live in the coop, the home of his bride. Contrast this with the situation of the new bride in patrivirilocal Bali, who most often goes to live in the house compound of her husband and his kin, where she joins other in-marrying women, who can all be outsiders.[7] High-caste Balinese women prefer to marry a patrilateral parallel cousin (i.e. a father's brother's son) because this promises a smoother transition as she is already related to the female affines ('in-laws') with whom she will live. However, there are those who cannot exercise this option—especially commoner women—and so they go to live among strangers (Connor 1983). Geertz and Geertz (1975: 161) comment: 'in any case, she is symbolically moving into her husband's ambit, not he into hers'. If the marriage fails, the children belong to the husband's natal group, and the wife may have to relinquish them. Batak (who practise patrilineal descent, patrivirilocal residence) assume that there will be conflict between the mother-in-law and her newly co-resident daughter-in-law (Rodgers 1990). In contrast, Geertz (1961) noted that Javanese newly-weds resided with either natal family for the first year of marriage.

Teknonymy (the practice whereby an adult is referred to as the mother/father or grandparent of the first-born child) is commonly encountered across the archipelago as the everyday form of address. It reinforces the stress on generation by promoting what Geertz and Geertz (1964) have called 'genealogical amnesia'. In relation to gender ideology, while teknonymous terms recognize gender differences (mothers vs. fathers), the practice also valorizes *parenthood* as the basis of adult social identity or personhood in a way that transcends an assumption of the association of women with reproduction and nurturing as being some kind of

natural basis of gender difference (see also Errington 1990: 17, for a discussion of bodies and personhood). While researching in Soroako, the man whose house I lived in was always called Panja—'Lofty'—and not by a teknonym, in spite of him being a father. I enquired about this from others in the community and was told: 'He took so long to have children, we had to call him something.' This underscores the significance of parenthood as a shift in social status, rather than parenthood defining adult identity in a specifically gendered way.

In terms of symbolic and affective dimensions of gender differences, the term used for nurturing children (*mengasuh*) is gender neutral and it is difficult to render the concept 'mothering' in Indonesian (Robinson 1985), as 'fathering' as much as 'mothering' involves a nurturing and close relationship, especially with young children. Furthermore, in these bilateral systems, there does not tend to be a marked preference for, or a valuing of, male over female children, the ideal family including at least one of each. I found in Soroako that this is linked to differences in the expression of masculinity and femininity: whereas it is expected that male children leave their natal homes to make their mark on the world, it is assumed that female children will stay near to their parents and support them in their old age.

In matrilineal societies, there is no sense that one gets in the patrilineal, or patrivirilocal societies, that girls are 'thrown away' as Connor has described in Bali (1983: 63). That is, because daughters marry and leave to join another group, they are not worth 'investing' in. In Bali, this sentiment applies to both secular and religious education. Knowledge of the sacred texts, which Connor points out are the knowledge base of the most lucrative healing practices, are not passed on to female children as it will be lost to strangers and potential competitors.

In Java, ties beyond the nuclear family are particularly strong with networks of related women, and the male role within the family is less significant than that of the woman—a tendency that Geertz terms 'matrifocal' (1961: 78). The tendency is most evident in female-headed households, for example, following death, divorce or even illness of the husband. Subsequent to her research, matrifocality has been addressed as an important aspect of gendered household relations by scholars writing on Java, Aceh and Minangkabau, most recently by Siapno (2002: 62) who defines it as characterizing kinship systems in which 'the role of the mother is structurally, culturally, and affectively central' and where 'women and men are important actors in the economic and ritual spheres'. In a further deviation from the official New Order designation of a national masculinity encompassing household heads, in bilateral societies, when marriages break up (and this is reportedly the case in about half of all marriages in Java and Aceh [Tanner 1974]), women have rights in the children they bear, and the children generally stay with the mother. Especially when divorce rates are high, this is not an insignificant matter. By contrast, Balinese women lose rights in their children if they divorce and this has the consequence that many tolerate their husband's polygamy, or endure unhappy marriages (Jennaway 2000). In bilateral societies, for ordinary people, there is not a strong notion of father right. In contradistinction to the

official New Order emphasis on the father and his elevation to authority as household head, in many parts of Indonesia, men perform their significant masculine roles as brothers and sons.

Beginning as early as the eleventh century, many of the bilateral societies of the archipelago (Sumatra, Java and Sulawesi) began to embrace Islam (Azra 2004). While in contemporary Indonesia there is public debate about the impact of Islam on the definition of appropriate female behaviour (see Chapter 7), ethnographic sources provide us with a way of addressing its impact on the construction of gender relationships and gendered identities. Writing in *The Javanese Family*, Geertz (1961: 76) mentions some 'faint and structurally unimportant customs which stress paternal ties' including the division of property following divorce (two male shares: one female share); a similar ratio in division of inheritance; the notion of male guardianship for girls by agnatic kin (kin in the paternal line); and the prohibition of marriage between paternal parallel cousins—that is, men marrying women termed father's brother's daughter (FBD). She comments that male guardianship is rarely practised and the rules on the division of property rarely followed: 'These rules function mainly in authorizing alternative solutions to quarrels among kinsmen' (Geertz 1961: 77). Except in cases of devout Muslims (*santri*), 'Islam as a legal system has hardly touched Java: its presence in the areas of marriage, divorce and inheritance is due largely to the support given by the Dutch to Islamic religious officials in the courts' (Geertz 1961: 77). Geertz notes that the prohibition of marriage to FBD is not an Islamic practice. In fact, this is a preferred form of marriage in many Arab societies. She surmises that the folk belief deeming the prohibition Islamic is perhaps related to guardianship.

In her review article on gender relations in Indonesia, Errington (1990: 54) labels the societies expressing bilateral kinship as 'the centrist archipelago' because of a preoccupation with unity and a view that fracture and divisiveness are a cause or result (or both) of 'personal illness, community misfortune or political failure'. This desire for unity is associated, in her view, with gender complementarity. These systems are in contrast with what she characterizes as the 'exchange archipelago' in eastern Indonesia and parts of Sumatra:

> The social organization of these societies is very complex, but the gist of it is that the entire system of marital exchanges they practice is predicated on the distinction between male and female, and the fact that women must leave their natal Houses (social groupings) in order to marry men who are not their 'brothers' (Errington 1990: 39).

In contrast to the 'centrist archipelago', their self-representation stresses not unity but matched pairs (Errington 1990: 55).

Early Dutch ethnographic analyses of these societies proceeded from the Durkheimian assumption that 'ultimately derives classification in general from the categorization of social forms' (Fox 1989: 35). In terms of kinship, the societies of the eastern archipelago were represented in Dutch ethnographic

studies as exhibiting the 'circulating connubium' in which women were exchanged between clans or other corporate groups designated in terms of relations of 'wife-givers' and 'wife takers'.[8] The 'exchange of women' assumed to characterize such dualistic societies was theorized as a basis of gender inequality (Rubin 1975). However, in approaching these social systems in terms of an analysis of gender relations, it would be wrong to assume that this image of men exchanging their sisters in marriage encompassed the experience of being male or female in these societies.

Formal models of the circulating connubium had a strong grip in anthropology: Howell (1995) commented on the manner in which she was oblivious to the importance of social groupings defined by relatedness in the female line, which she ascribes to her being captive to the received model of these societies as groups of men exchanging women.

The Kodi of Sumba have been described as having a distinctive system of double descent, where the patriclans are localized, and the matriclans dispersed: this social system enables us to explore 'linkages between gender constructs and types of political power' (Hoskins 1990: 190):

> Rights to land, ritual office, livestock and lineage houses are all passed along the patriline, but certain types of magical knowledge, food taboos and personality traits are passed along the matriline. Only patriclans or *parona* are formal corporate groups that convene at marriages, funerals and prestige feasts to discuss transfers of women, livestock, and objects within the sacred patrimony. But matriclans (*walla*) are linked to the transmission of witchcraft, magical skills, and secret arts of weaving and dying cloth (ibid.).

In contrast to the uxorilocally dwelling women of the bilateral societies, women in these societies frequently experience separation from their natal families and their intimate relationships in marriage. Women in Kodi (Sumba) 'mourn their dead by recalling their feelings of detachment and separation that they experienced as brides, transferred to another house and village' (Hoskins 1998: 246). Hoskins does not, however, leave us with an impression that women are devoid of power in relation to men. She also recounts the manner in which the women's songs at the time of the most important ritual celebration (worm swarming) tease men and mock their sexuality, at the same time as the rituals provide an occasion that allows for sexual play (Hoskins 1998: 167). In practice, a wide variety of practices in regard to post-marital residence are found throughout the 'exchange archipelago', an aspect of the diverse gender orders and forms of gendered power that characterize the region.

The societies of eastern Indonesia are characterized as dualistic not only for their marriage systems but also for their symbolic systems 'in which dualisms of every sort pervade ritual and everyday life' (Errington 1990: 18). Errington continues:

> [A] rhetoric of gender could be used to characterize 'male' and 'female' cosmic energies, roles, activities, functions in a particular society, but without a presumption that they either reflect or are anchored in physical differences between men and women, or that the sexed bodies of individual men and women are required to fulfil or enact those roles. The ties between physical sex and gendered energies may be much looser than we usually imagine them to be (Errington 1990: 18).

Dualistic symbolic expressions of gender and of male and female principles characterize these societies (see, for example, Errington 1990). But while symbolic constructs are expressed in binary pairs, it is not in ways that express fixed relations. In a corpus of work analysing the way in which eastern Indonesian symbolic systems operate, Fox (1980, 1989) refutes the Durkheimian proposition concerning categorization noted above. Dyadic oppositions of male/female, wife-giver/wife-taker, inner/outer, north/south, older/younger or trunk/tip are common, but they cannot be lined up in columns that indicate a fixed hierarchy or order of precedence between them. Fox outlines a set of principles relating to the expression of these complementary categories: for example, 'recursive complementarity'—one component of a complementary pair can potentially contain elements of its complement (Fox 1989: 46). That is, no one term is always superior. And while the term female is commonly associated with inner/still and male with outer/active, such terms can be reversed ('categorical reversal') and the term inner/still, for example, can be superior. Using his analytical principles, it is difficult to argue for a hierarchical ordering of the pair 'male–female' at the level of symbolism which can be read back as an expression of male dominance. Symbolic expressions of gender work in practice with other principles of gender structuring.

Marriage exchanges in eastern Indonesia are conceptualized in terms of the 'flow of life', where women's fertility is central to the continuity of social groups and social relations. In marriage exchange, women are valued symbolically as givers of life, and practically as the members of the group who cement alliances (Fox 1980). In a more prosaic formulation, an Alor informant responded to DuBois's question about preference for male or female children: 'Boys are good. They give us our death feasts. But girls are also good. We get their bride-price' (DuBois 1944: 112). Viewing the marriage system as social practices rather than just a set of formal principles has significance for understanding the power relations of everyday life, in the practice of everyday affairs.

As noted earlier, anatomical sex is not automatically or axiomatically connected to properties and social roles that are male and female. Howell (1995) notes that Lio (Flores) women performing certain ritual roles are regarded as male, and live as men. This echoes transgender practices found in other parts of the archipelago (Boellstorff 2002), for example, the Bugis *bissu* priests are sexually ambiguous, and biology does not define their gender (Graham 2004); their gender ambiguity fits them to communicate with divine beings. Their anomalous relationship to binary symbolic categories is the source of their status

and power, rather than their ambiguous relation to socially constituted gender roles.

It is noteworthy that there are echoes of such pervasive dualisms in the 'centrist archipelago' in the centrality of generational (rather than gender) distinctions; the importance of the inner–outer binary in some settings; and the association of women with fertility, for example, in the Acehnese identification of women with rice and men with money. The Islamic Tolaki of Southeast Sulawesi reckon kinship bilaterally, but have a highly developed system of dual classification in which male–female is a key element (Bergink 1987).

While New Order ideology imagined a unitary field for an ideal pattern of hierarchically ordered male–female relations—a pattern assumed to be the ideal throughout the archipelago—centering on a household in which men exercised exclusive power over women, this does not adequately represent the multiple forms of gender orders found throughout the archipelago. In particular, matrifocal elements in bilateral kinship give women sources of power in everyday relations, and bilateral inheritance ensures their access to productive resources. Symbolic constructions of gender relations cannot be assumed to reflect a privileging of the masculine. (This is reflected in the Islamic courts' recognition of women's common property rights which is discussed below).

## Islamic influence on localized gender regimes

Social practices arising out of the ways of regulating kinship and social relatedness cannot be regarded as pure manifestations of *adat* and are imbricated with—indeed often inseparable from—other ideological systems which also have regulations in regard to personal and social life. Apart from the incorporation of gender ideology into state practices of governmentality, perhaps the most significant ideological influences are world religions. Islam has been slowly spreading through the archipelago from around the twelfth century. While the overwhelming majority of Indonesians profess Islam, the social expression of Islamic belief and practice is not uniform throughout the archipelago. As will be discussed below, the manner in which Islam is accommodated into local practices varies across the archipelago. Also, Islamic conversion in Indonesia was not accomplished by a single wave and thus, although the Syafii *mazhab* (school of jurisprudence) is dominant, others are represented in Indonesia, and these have differing implications for family law, and hence for gender relations. The influence of Christianity predates the period of Dutch colonial rule, in some places by several hundred years. Neither Islam nor Christianity can be understood as 'accretions' on a pristine cultural base of *adat*. Aragon (2000: 4) notes in the case of a community in Central Sulawesi that has been Christian for over a century, that in everyday religious practice, there is a seamless expression of piety through elements that can be analytically distinguished as Christian and *adat*. However, 'their religion, a legacy of Dutch colonial rule, represents for them a set of spiritual and cultural ties to the modern, global world' (ibid.). A similar comment can be made about Indonesian Islam, where local

expressions of piety encompass *adat*, and international Islam represents an alternative cosmopolitanism to Western influence.

In what ways does Islam provide a basis for gender orders in Indonesia? And how has Islamic practice been transmuted by existing gender practices and gender regimes in the long process of Islamization? Given that the overwhelming majority of Indonesia's citizens are Muslim, it is noteworthy that Islam has been largely ignored as an aspect of gender relations in several of the major 'survey papers' which have been written on gender relations in Indonesia, such as Errington's (1990) 'Regional overview' in *Power and Difference* or the introduction to Sears's (1996a) edited collection, *Fantasizing the Feminine in Indonesia*. There are many Islamic principles concerned with regulating relations between men and women that are ostensibly in conflict with *adat* found throughout the archipelago (Bowen 2003). For example, Islamic principles of inheritance, favouring men, are in conflict with more gender-equal customs in the 'centrist archipelago'. There can be a difference of interest between men and women in this regard, with women championing traditional principles, and the men Islamic principles. This has occurred in South Sulawesi, for example, and it is also an issue in Minangkabau, West Sumatra.[9]

Especially since the 1990s, there has been evidence of an intensification of Islamization in many parts of Indonesia, publicly manifested in the increasing popularity of the striking symbol of gendered Islamic identity—head covering. The shift away from a strong centralized state to regional autonomy based on the districts since the fall of Suharto has enabled some local authorities to enact regulations that limit the autonomy of women in regard to dress, travelling/being in public after dark, and (in at least one case) denying them rights to sit in local parliaments—in the name of the imposition of sharia law (see Chapter 7). These regulations, coupled with the very public debate in 1998 about whether Indonesia as a majority Muslim nation could have a woman president, would seem on the surface to indicate that Islam is an important source of gender inequity in Indonesia. However, these observations need to be qualified. The national parliament has not supported the local regulations purporting to institute sharia law, except in Aceh which has been granted special autonomy status. Although any kind of 'veiling' seems anathema to Western observers, it is too simplistic to see this as an index of subordination, as it can also be a strategy by which Muslim women create Muslim public space through their dress (Ask and Tjomsland 1998). Megawati Sukarnoputri's right to be president was contested by some Muslim leaders and scholars, but supported by others, and her party won the largest share of votes, including strong support in supposedly hard-line Muslim areas like East Java (Robinson 2004).

We can address the question of the impact of Islam on the gender orders of the archipelago by reviewing ethnographic studies of Indonesian Islamic populations, noting the extent to which they manifest an Islamic dimension to the expression of gender difference. The process of Islamization is ongoing in the archipelago, and I have selected three societies for which we have ethnographic descriptions over a long period: Java, Aceh (in northern Sumatra) and Bugis (in South Sulawesi). I focus especially on kinship and marriage, property and

inheritance, and ritual–religious practice. There are complex, contradictory and varied relationships between practices associated with expressions of masculinity and femininity, and with gender power, in these Islamic societies of the archipelago.

### *Java*

Clifford Geertz's *Religion of Java* (1960) is a now-classic study of a town in east central Java, based on research conducted in the 1950s. The central theme of the work is the discussion of three identifiable 'strands' in a synthetic complex of religious belief and practice, which influence the conduct of everyday life. These strands manifest differential emphasis on the observance of Islamic precepts, Hindu-derived elements and animistic 'folk' practices. Geertz (1960) describes the significant life crisis rituals surrounding marriage, pregnancy, birth, important phases in the child's early life, first menstruation and circumcision (for boys) (see also H. Geertz 1961). All these rites—even the circumcision required by Islam—rely on traditional ceremonial forms including the propitiation of non-Islamic spirits. Marriage, he says, was 'until recently' arranged by both sets of parents (Geertz 1960: 53). He comments that already at this time (that is, the 1950s) the boy and girl had commonly reached an 'understanding', although the proposal was formally conducted in the old way of a request to the bride's parents by the groom's (the decline in arranged marriages is discussed in Chapter 5). At the time of his study, the bride did not usually go to the religious official's (*naib*) house for the legal marriage, conducted according to Islam. There she was represented by her *wali* (the nearest male relative in a paternal line):

> The *naib* informs the boy that if he does not feed his wife, sleep with her or provide her a place to live in, or if he abandons her for three months with no information as to his whereabouts, the girl will be entitled to demand divorce from him (Geertz 1960: 56).

This is an account of the practice of the *taklik talak* (conditional divorce), the common adaptation of Islam that resolves potential conflict with *adat* in relation to divorce. Lev (1996: 193, 195) comments that in Indonesia the Islamic family law regime has proven very supportive of women's rights in marriage. This is not simply a consequence of a 'native' adaptation to Islam, but also of demands put by women at the first Indonesian Women's Congress in 1928—the demand that women be informed of their rights in regard to divorce at the time of marriage (see Chapter 2).

Clifford Geertz describes the spells uttered and rituals performed when the bride and groom meet at the ceremony. The bride executes a gesture of obeisance, the *sembah*, although he comments that this may be simply a handshake, especially for *santri* (devout Muslims). In his view, Islam reduces the likelihood of this act of obeisance. There is a ceremony in which the bride kneels in front

of the groom, breaking an egg on his foot—the white symbolizing her loss of purity, the yolk the breaking of the hymen. This also symbolizes her subservience to her husband, and Geertz (1960: 58) comments that this ceremonial act is often eliminated 'as inconsistent with contemporary notions as to the equal status of men and women'.

Geertz (1960) described the costume at the marriage as based on traditional dress of the royal palace (*kraton*), although he reports that *santri* girls wear white gowns. The 'royal' costume symbolizes that they are 'prince and princess for a day', a description of the bride and groom commonly used in Indonesia. They sit on the 'throne' to receive guests (*duduk bersanding*), their immobility signifying spiritual power, as they display the capacity of *tapa* (empty of thought and sensation) which is a fundamental concept in Javanese spiritual practice. As is common in Muslim Indonesia, socially legitimated marriage depends on the Islamic *nikah* and the *duduk bersanding*, which always comes second, and is the socially legitimating rite. For the *nikah*, it is only required that the groom, the girls' guardian (*wali*) and two witnesses be present, whereas the *duduk bersanding* absolutely requires the bride and the groom. In contemporary Java, however, the bride and groom may be present at the *nikah* (Pemberton 1994: 218), a practice now followed in many parts of Indonesia, and it is becoming a large public ritual, preceding the *duduk bersanding*. Hence, Geertz presents a picture of a society in which Islam is but one of the factors influencing the conduct of marriage, and religious and ritual practice. He does not address property and inheritance, but in *The Javanese Family*, a companion volume written in the same period, H. Geertz (1961: 46) notes that Javanese do not settle such matters by recourse to 'impersonal legal prescription'. Rather, each case is taken on its merits. While the Islamic law, which she says all people know, is that sons inherit twice as much as daughters. The 'real Javanese law' is equal inheritance. But in a particular case, one might find that 'both rules have been ignored' (Geertz 1961: 47) and some siblings deemed more needy (a divorced sister, the youngest children who still cannot support themselves) have been given the entire inheritance, while others receive nothing.

Geertz (1961: 78–9) also addresses the internal family dynamics of the Javanese matrifocal family in which the woman has 'more authority, influence and responsibility than her husband and at the same time receives more affection and loyalty' which leaves the 'male role relatively functionless in regard to the internal affairs of the nuclear family'. It matters neither if that role is filled, nor if it is filled serially by different men.

The ritual communal feast, *slametan*, held to celebrate significant life events, is a focus of C. Geertz's study. He sees this ritual feast as the core of the Javanese religious system, even though most Javanese profess Islam. The feast, in his view, is essentially pre-Islamic although Muslim prayers are part of the complex. The guests at the ritual are men, as are the majority of participants in the Friday prayers at the mosque: women are hardly in evidence. He describes women as remaining *mburi*—behind or in the kitchen (1960: 12)—and reports their role as preparing the food. It has taken later studies of Java by wome

scholars to 'fill out' the spiritual and material dimension of the apparently mundane contribution of women to this ritual. Stoler (1977) addressed the important role of women in the preparation of the food, and on its distribution. Sullivan (1994) describes *rewang*, the preparation of special food for the *slametan* feast as the specifically ?all female? part of the ritual. She argues that this is also a sacred aspect of the ceremony, attended by gods, spirits and ancestors (Sullivan 1994: 157). However, she concludes that the public face of the *slametan*, men assembling as guests, helps maintain male power, and circumvents avenues for women to gain ?formal or spiritual power? by their participation (Sullivan 1994: 159).

In a manner that would seem to be counter to the idea of Islam as a religion that limits women's role in public life, and to the (Javanese) ideological formulation often heard during the New Order of the wife as *kanca wingking* ('friend behind'), the markets in Java have long been dominated by women (Alexander 1987). The association of women with money and commerce has been the basis of a scholarly debate about the bases of women's social power, which I will return to later.

### *Aceh*

The Acehnese, living on the northern tip of Sumatra, have long had a sense of themselves as a strongly Islamic people, and were the first in the archipelago to be converted. The nineteenth-century Dutch scholar of Islam, Snouck Hurgronje, commented that women in Aceh had a 'fairly high' position for a Muslim society:

> This is indeed what we should expect in a country where the throne was occupied for more than half a century (1641–1699) by four successive female rulers. Even now, there are instances of female government in the dependencies, and it is the rule rather than the exception to find the wives of *uleebelangs* and other chiefs exercising very considerable influence on all their actions. It is very common for the wife of a chief to wield her husband's authority in his absence and a case occurred not long ago on the East Coast where a woman of the ruling class with her hair hanging loose, took actual part in a civil war (Snouck Hurgronje, cited in Jayawardena 1977: 35).

Nonetheless, Snouck Hurgronje stressed the patrilineal elements of the kinship system, derived partly from Islam (cited in Jayawardena 1977: 22). Indeed, the Acehnese claim to be patrilineal like the Arabs, a declaration related to their claim for preeminence as Muslim peoples in the archipelago. Snouck Hurgronje pointed to features of their kinship system that made them more like the neighbouring matrilineal Minangkabau. Indeed he stated that men are essentially superfluous in Acehnese households and are treated like guests in their wives' houses (Snouck Hurgronje, cited in Tanner 1974).

Jayawardena (1977: 26) further explores the matrilineal elements in Aceh: 'men play little part in the customary wedding ceremonies' which take place in the bride's home. While most of the cooking for the guests is done by men, women cook the delicacies for the bride and groom. The groom's father does not accompany him in the procession to the bride's house, and only women, children and the bridal pair are involved in the *duduk bersanding*. The new husband stays in the bride's house for three nights. When she is escorted to meet his mother, the groom and his father are not present. The ceremony symbolizes marriage as being effected between groups of women (Jayawardena 1977).

According to Jayawardena (1977: 33), 'they accept the "patrilineal" bias of Islamic orthodoxy and reckon the kin of the father's side more extensively [a wider range of kin] and value them more in formal terms'. At the same time, they practice uxorilocal residence, which means that local communities tend to be groups of related women. Parents provide daughters with a house and indeed, women are identified with the house; the men gather together in the *meunassah*, which serves as both a prayer hall and a meeting place for men. While inheritance is formally Islamic, stressing a bias in favour of men, in practice property is more usually distributed by *hibah*, or gift, by the parents to their children as they form their own families. Uxorilocal residence means that men depend on rice provided by their wives for subsistence. Indeed, rice fields are women's work—women seek rice (*mita breuh*) while men seek money (*mita peng*) (this has echoes of the eastern Indonesian association of women with agricultural as well as human fertility). Women provide for their own and their children's subsistence. In contrast to Java, the market is the province of men and it is common for men to go away on trading ventures. Siegel (1969) has emphasized the importance of the custom for men to *merantau* (migrate, sojourn) outside Aceh to find work and bring income home. Men are absent from the community for long periods, underscoring the matrifocal elements in Acehnese social organization. A man who goes away and fails to send back money can legitimately be divorced by his wife (Jayawardena 1977: 29), and divorce rates are reportedly high in Aceh (30–50 per cent) (Tanner 1974). Masculinity is not constituted by authority in the household.

Acehnese formally acknowledge the dual manifestation of Islam and custom (*adat*) in the distinction between *wali hukum* (relatives on one's father's side) and *wali adat* (relatives on the mother's side) (Jayawardena 1977: 24). The *wali hukum* correspond to the patrilineal clans, called Kawon, identified by Snouck Hurgronje (Jayawardena 1977: 23). However, the custom of uxorilocal residence means that one lives with matrilateral relatives. After marriage, a man lives with his wife's matrilateral kin. These are the people one relies on in a crisis. The *wali hukum* inherit property, but as noted above, property is more usually disposed of through gifting (*hibah*), so there is normally not much left for the *wali hukum*. In Bourdieu's terms, it would appear that while 'official kin' are *wali hukum*, reckoned on patrilineal lines, a man's 'practical kin' are the *wali adat*, matrilateral relatives and affines/in-laws.

Matrilateral kin relationships are the ones effectively mobilized in the practical matters of everyday life, while the patrilineal relationships are important in the abstract ordering of the social world (Bourdieu 1977: 33–8). Hence, the Acehnese, despite their avowal of their commitment to Islam, have not exhibited a strong influence of Islam in the ordering of male–female relationships in regard to marriage, property and inheritance. Islam appears to have its strongest gender effects in reinforcing a sense of male solidarity, in the *meunassah* and in the *rantau*. Men's involvement as combatants in the recent civil war have exacerbated this tendency, but at the same time, severe population dislocations due to the conflict have undermined the local relationships that supported women's independence and authority in the household (Immajati 2008).

Jayawardena has characterized the village as a world of women and *adat* as a way of ordering life that gives women preeminence (i.e. matrifocality). He contrasts this with the egalitarian Islamic brotherhood which the men find in the *rantau* where they go to plant pepper gardens. This is where their masculinity is formed. They experience *merantau* as a move away from the childish indulgence of senses and desires (*hawa nafsu*) toward the Muslim ideal of rationality (*akal*) (Peacock 1973: 110) and self-denial. This opposition provides a way of conceptualizing masculinity and femininity, with women more closely associated with *hawa nafsu* and men with *akal* (Siegel 1969; see also Peletz 1996), the latter deemed morally and religiously superior. When men return to their wives' houses, they can satisfy their desires and are indulged again like children, but this leaves them without authority in regard to their wives. The binary categorization of masculine rationality and greater spiritual potency, corresponding to feminine passion, incorporates the related notion that women also have more shame (*malu*) that keeps their inherently passionate nature in check (Peletz 1996). No single binary encompasses gender differences.

### *Bugis*

The Bugis of South Sulawesi also regard their profession of Islamic faith as a cornerstone of their ethnic identity. Kinship is bilateral, and both men and women remain members of their natal groups upon marriage (Millar 1983: 484). In contracting a marriage, the most important consideration is the relative status of the man and the woman. This is related to differentiation of rank, based on the notion of noble strata descended from ancestral beings who established ruling lines (*tomanurung*), that is, a kind of divine descent. It is expressed as the degree of white blood (*darah putih*), this quality being diluted by marriage with commoners. High noble descent is also associated with a high degree of spiritual purity, expressed in terms of a balance of *bateng* and *lahireng* (inner experience and worldly accomplishments). This balance is the basis of maintaining *harga diri* or self-esteem. Millar (1983: 477) opens her paper: 'On interpreting gender in Bugis society' with an anecdote about her observations of women serving men in public ceremonies and assuming that 'such displays of deference manifested implicit Bugis notions that men are socially dominant'. She came to

realize, however, that 'gender relations in Bugis society are almost entirely subordinate to a cultural preoccupation with hierarchical social location' (Millar 1983: 477). This social location, acknowledged as status honour, arises on the basis of ascribed status of white blood and acquired status through personal achievement. One of the most important avenues of personal achievement open to men and women is making the Muslim pilgrimage to Mecca.[10]

Marriage is fundamental to asserting and achieving recognition of relative social location/status. Unions are ideally contracted between people who are members of the same kindred (one's relationships reckoned in male and female lines)—usually cousins of the second degree or more distant. The aim is to reinforce existing relationships. Marriages can also be contracted with outsiders, to bring new people into family networks (Pelras 1996: 156). Post-marital residence is uxorilocal, and marriage is a strategy for both men and women to increase prestige and social connections. Negotiations between the 'sides' concern payment of the *sompa*, a traditional payment that symbolizes the relative status of the bride (and hence her family), and the *dui menre*, a payment for the costs of the ceremony (Pelras 1996: 156). Marriage negotiations are opened in an informal way by older women of the groom's group. Keeler (1990) describes a similar practice in Java: apparently older women are able to speak more informally and freely than men.

Marriage symbolizes the social standing of the two groups. However, it also symbolizes idealized gender practices. As in other parts of the archipelago, the social moment of marriage is the *duduk bersanding*, when the bride and groom sit for hours before the assembled guests. In the past, for elite weddings, it could be days (Pelras 1996: 159)! The bride in particular keeps her eyes modestly cast downwards throughout the display. Thus she manifests docility and stillness, regarded as desirable in a young woman. These days when entertainment is likely to be a lively Dangdut performance, the modest feminine demeanor of the bride is often in stark contrast to the overtly sexual gyrations of the Dangdut singers dressed in lurex hotpants. Divorce currently can be requested by either husband or wife, through the Office of Religious Affairs (KUA). The reasons given are in accord with Islamic law: economic hardship, sterility, taking of an additional wife, moral crisis, political reasons and failure to satisfy the obligations of the contract. In Soppeng, where Millar did her research, the latter reason is the most common (Millar 1983: 485). But her follow-up on this point revealed that this was the official reason used in cases of incompatibility, between the couple or between their families—reinforcing her argument that marriage is about kin ties, ties to important leaders, and about social location (Millar 1983: 486).

In South Sulawesi, Islamic principles of inheritance favouring male rights have been encroaching on bilateral principles of inheritance, which recognize entitlements of both sexes. In contested cases, a sharp difference of economic interest can pit male proponents of Muslim rules against women championing traditional norms. A similar dynamic has been observed in Minangkabau, where matrilineal principles of inheritance—which give women inheritance rights—are

being challenged in terms of Islam, but also the commodification of land is opening up the possibility of men passing property in land to their sons (van der Meer 1997). Religious discourse is reshaping women's economic rights.

Errington (1989) and Millar (1983), both ethnographers of the Bugis, relate differential power of men and women to ideas of power in a broader sense. They see prestige and power in Bugis society resulting from presumed divine descent which outweighs the power arising on the basis of (male) gender. Millar (1983: 490) concludes that for the Bugis, 'conceptions of gender are embedded within a system of coherence in which conceptions of personhood, society and power constitute the core' that determines the social location (status honour) of individuals.

An important Bugis concept in organizing male–female relationships, which is inextricably linked with ideas of social location, is *siri'* (honour/shame). *Siri'* is an attribute of social groups and individuals. However, while women are the primary symbol of family *siri'* (Millar 1983: 484), standing for the lowest reckoning of a group's *bateng*, or spiritual potency, it is the male members of a family (especially brothers) who have the obligation to react with aggression to transgressions of family *siri'*. Jayawardena (1977) notes a similar set of beliefs in Aceh, related to the complex of ideas about male rationality and female passion. In Bugis discourse, *siri'* is not linked to Islam but rather to their own cultural specificity.

While such behaviour might be viewed as simply a case of the perpetuation of male control over female sexuality, this explanation fails to account fully for the significance of *siri'* in social practice as an element of the social patterning of desire and the constitution of ethnic difference. *Siri'* is fundamental to how the Bugis see themselves, how they contrast themselves to others and how others see them, so it takes on significance in everyday interactions in contemporary, multicultural Indonesia. The stereotyped view of Bugis masculinity assumes men are passionate, impulsive and preoccupied with *siri'* (manifesting as self-esteem and self-pride in one's group's social standing), and the Bugis proudly lay claim to this stereotype. Great store is placed on the sexual virtue of women and the role of men in protecting that virtue. In 1984 in the South Sulawesi capital, Ujungpandang (now Makassar), I witnessed such a case. A young Bugis man, a student with a modern lifestyle, wished to marry his girlfriend despite parental opposition to the match. So he pretended to kidnap her at gunpoint, enacting the stereotype of Bugis males as hot-headed, intending to run off with her to Jakarta. Her brothers caught them together on a passenger ship, before it left port. In defence of honour and to prevent shame, that is, by the code of *siri'*, the brothers had no choice but to insist that the couple marry, and the couple had every reason to comply, since the alternative under the code would have been for the brothers to kill him. The couple thus 'gave in' and were wed, neatly achieving their original goal of marriage over parental objection while restoring the bride's virtue in accord with *siri'*. The patterning of masculinity and femininity and the social patterning of desire are embedded in the symbolic constructs by which cultural groups define themselves.

Another aspect of the manner in which *siri'* is enacted in everyday life serves to deny women any social agency. Some male friends from the related Makassarese identity group were discussing with me the circumstances of their marriages. Both had *siliariang* or elopements. In both cases, some innocent social encounters with young women had resulted in the women arriving on their doorsteps, claiming that their *siri'* had been compromised. A wedding by elopement was the only way to save their honour and avoid vengeance of their male relatives on themselves and the prospective grooms. Both men saw this as evidence of their own spiritual potency that had unwittingly inveigled the young women. Neither countenanced the other possible interpretation, of a young woman taking a calculated risk to secure a desired marriage partner.

Islam provides a discourse and set of practices that impinge on gender relations, gender symbolism and (especially in the case of marriage, divorce and inheritance) gendered power, but in the long process of Islamization, there has been a variety of forms of accommodation with the gender orders of the archipelago. Islam has also furnished a public discourse for articulating and contesting idealized masculinities and femininities, and appropriate gender roles, which encompasses women organizing in public life and, in the current period, a basis for a uniquely Indonesian brand of feminism (see Chapter 7).

## Economic and spiritual power—the debate from Java

Anthropology, like all social science disciplines, has been influenced by critiques arising within feminist theory which have impacted on ways of theorizing social relations, and on empirical research (Moore 1994). This critique forms the background to a debate concerning the relative status of women and men in Java, which has focused on discussion of their relative economic roles. Errington proposes that the assertion of women's higher status in Southeast Asia relative to other parts of the world (noted earlier) reflects a restricted notion of power in Western thought, which is used to make comparisons of women across different societies. She argues that this Western idea takes it for granted that power is a 'secular relation between people' (Errington 1990: 41). The idea of spiritual potency and its connection with power is widespread throughout the archipelago, and she links this to the question of gender differences:

> [W]omen in many of these societies are assumed to be more calculating, instrumental, and direct than men, and their very control of practical matters and money, their economic 'power' may be the opposite of the kind of 'power' or spiritual potency that brings the greatest prestige; it may assure them of lower rather than higher prestige . . . to pull out of context their economic and instrumental power and to designate it as the most important factor in high prestige is to create an optical illusion based on the importation of Eurocentic ideas about the relations of power and prestige (Errington 1990: 6–7).

While power operating through institutions and taking the form of the oppression of one group by another is important to the structure of gender, Connell points to the importance of a Foucauldian notion of power as dispersed and operating discursively, in understanding gender relationships. Power, in this sense, 'impacts directly on people's bodies as "discipline" as well as on their identities and sense of place in the world' (Connell 2002: 59).

It is undeniable that the significant economic role of women in most parts of the archipelago is an important foundation of gender relations. The actuality of their lived experience is at variance from the ideological agenda of the New Order government that identified women with wifehood and housewifery. Errington (1990) expands the scope of our interrogation of gender and power. Women's prestige and social authority has to be understood in terms of their access to, and ability (or lack of ability) to control sources of spiritual potency. In this vein, Sullivan (1994) refutes the claim that Javanese women's control of household finances is a source of power: money is low prestige (*kasar*).

Hatley (1990) and Keeler (1990) similarly stress the ideological devaluing of women and the feminine in Java: women are regarded as having lower prestige because they are held to be less able to control their 'animal' passions and to succeed (like men) in the ascetic practices associated with the control of spiritual power. They are associated with material actions, such as maintaining household finances. Djajadiningrat-Nieuwenhuis (1987) presents a similar argument in regard to the bases of women's power in modernizing Indonesia. However, this binary model of male/spiritual/prestigious and female/worldly/lacking prestige has been questioned by Brenner (1995: 80) who points to a countervailing Javanese ideology, which she argues is encountered just as frequently. This suggests that women out of necessity control the household purse because men are presumed to be less able to control their baser passions, and are likely to spend money irresponsibly, on gambling, drinking or other women. Peletz (1996) has similarly focused on the gendered distribution of rationality and passion linked to gendered power among Minangkabau in Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia.

## Gender and class/status inequality

Gender cannot be regarded as an autonomous aspect of social life that operates independently from other processes of social differentiation such as ethnicity and class. These forms of social difference are mutually influencing, even constitutive of one another. The diverse gender orders found across the archipelago are not just expressions of social and cultural differences. While status differences are arrayed on a relatively small scale in many parts of the archipelago, in places where there have been traditional polities, gender has become caught up in the expression of status differences, in the manner of Bugis honour discussed above. The best known of these practices relate to the courts of Central Java, and the practices of *pingitan* or 'caging' of adolescent/pubescent girls

until the time of their marriage, celebrated through the life of national heroine Kartini (see Chapter 2). The Javanese term used to mean 'wife', *kanca wingking*, literally means 'friend behind', underscoring women's inferior role (Siregar 2007: 39). This Javanese *priyayi* (elite) construct of appropriate femininity is presumed to have informed New Order gender ideology.

Class differences are entwined with gender differences, through the exploitation of women as lower paid wage labourers, or the exclusion of women from productive work. In a now-classic paper, Stoler (1977) argued that the degree of autonomy exercised by Javanese rural women rested on the amount of land available to them and their families, rather than deriving axiomatically from their social position as women. In a further illustration, prostitution may seem to be a form of gender oppression (a consequence of 'patriarchy'), but it is also a form of class oppression that may in addition 'select' particular women on the basis of their membership of a specific ethnic or local group. Class differences particularly emerged under the influence of colonial policies, through loss of agricultural land, industrial employment, and trafficking in women which emerged as critical issues in the twentieth century and were taken up by women's chapters of the nationalist movement (addressed in Chapter 2). Class differences contribute to differences in the experience and expression of gender for men and women.

## Conclusion

The homogenizing imperative of New Order definitions of appropriate gender roles masked profound differences in the patterns of gender relations and in gender ideologies throughout the archipelago. Ethnographic studies provide insights into these diverse gender orders, which provide varied possibilities for the exercise of agency by men and women. While kinship and marriage are expressions of *adat*, the dynamic archipelago has experienced centuries of influence from world religions, external economic forces and associated socio-cultural change which have impacted on gender relations and personal life. The bland homogenized gender ideology of the New Order also masked the intersection of gender relations with other forms of power, such as spiritual potency, as well as with principles of social differentiation such as generation or class. State ideology reduced gender relations to the question of 'women's status' (*kedudukan wanita*) grounded in biological destiny (*kodrat*). However, the complexities of gender relations cannot be encompassed in this unproblematically singular dimension: 'status' is a synthetic construct, and it draws together a range of variables from the economic and the political, to the cultural and the social (Quinn 1977). Gender is 'a cultural system of practices and symbols implicating both women and men' (Errington 1990: 3), and gender relations encompass multiple structures relating to the exercise of power, the economy and emotional attachment in adult relationships, as well as symbolism (Connell 1987; 2002)

No simple binary encompasses gender relations. The review presented in this chapter points to the diversity in gender structures throughout the archipelago, in particular the gender orders associated with bilateral kinship and the ways in which Islam, in particular (as the religion of the majority of the population), has accommodated to the structures of gender relationships that it encountered. It has also addressed the interactions of binary gender symbolism with lived everyday gender relationships and forms of gendered power.

Unitary gender constructs and representations of 'natural' and 'traditional' gender roles masks the 'renegotiations and inventions' that occurred as a consequence of New Order economic strategies, which have sought integration with the global economy. Ong and Peletz (1995: 2) focus on the 'need to continuously negotiate and invent' forms of identity in postcolonial Southeast Asia: indigenous notions bearing on masculinity and femininity, on gender equality and complementarity, and on various criteria of prestige and stigma are being reworked in the dynamic postcolonial contexts of outmigration, nation building, cultural nationalism and international business.

Indonesia's positioning in the global economic order has been accomplished through an authoritarian political regime and has been accompanied by global cultural flows, which have all had consequences for constructions of femininity, and also masculinity. The militarized hegemonic masculinity of the New Order exercised domination over less powerful masculinities, as well as over women. The dynamic historical forces (including Islam, feminism and secular nationalism), which have led to renegotiations and reworkings of gender orders and gender ideologies, are taken up in subsequent chapters, as is the homogenizing imperative of the New Order.

# 2 People's Sovereignty, Gender Equity

> Nations are not just phantasmagoria of the mind, but are historical and institutional practices through which social difference is invented and performed. Nationalism becomes, as a result, radically constitutive of people's identities, through social contests that are frequently violent and always gendered (McClintock 1993: 61).

On International Women's Day 2000, Indonesian women in the industrial city of Surabaya took to the streets in a noisy protest about the failure of the post-Suharto Reform government to provide adequate legal protection for workers, especially women workers. The leaders of the protest were young women, wearing jeans and using megaphones to call out to onlookers. The television images showed a group of elderly women seated in *becak* (pedicabs) accompanying the protest. These elderly women in their print frocks created a demure picture compared to their younger sisters, but as the TV news camera panned over the crowd, one of the fragile old women raised her arm in a triumphant gesture, reminding us that in Indonesia, the struggle for democracy and women's rights has a long history. This chapter explores the contestations over gender relations as part of the struggle for an Indonesian nation.

Myth-making and story-telling are the bedrock of national identities. The official historical account of the genesis of the Indonesian nation are framing discourses, including contested 'historical and institutional practices' through which gender differences have been 'invented and performed' (McClintock 1993: 61). The New Order used history in valorizing maternal domesticated femininity (the loyal wife and daughter), and in demonizing 'transgressive' challenges to paternal/patriarchal authority represented by Gerwani (the mass women's movement associated with the Indonesian Communist Party which was banned in 1965). The post-Suharto period has allowed some (re)discovery of people's history.

The first section of this chapter traces the genesis of the women's movement and its role in creating the nation. It focuses on some of the significant individuals and events that have furnished the raw material for national myth-making. European and Islamic political ideals were influential on the emerging

indigenous elite in the colonial Netherlands East Indies (NEI), especially from the late nineteenth century, and consciousness of the political category 'woman' emerged contemporaneously with the first imaginings of nation. Since the late 1920s, women's political activism crystallized through a series of congresses. The second section traces the gender politics of the struggle for independence and the first decade of the new republic, noting the continuities in the demands women's organizations made on the state, and the tensions and divisions between sections of the movement. Marriage (relations in the private world of the family) and education (women's entry into public life) emerged as key points of gender contestation from the beginnings of the nationalist struggle and continue to be important foci of gender politics in Indonesia. The historical account of the social contestation over gender relations given here informs our understanding of contemporary struggles, even though much of this political history was erased from public memory by the self-conscious myth-making of the New Order.

## The genesis of the politics of gender

Dutch rule spread gradually over a period of four centuries to encompass most of the Indonesian archipelago (the NEI). Initially Dutch power was spread through the commercial agency, the United East India Company (Verenigde Oost-Indische Campagnie or VOC—the most powerful global economic entity at the time), which acquired control over vast regions of the Indies through intervening in power struggles between local polities. It ended in bankruptcy in the late eighteenth century: 'At the time of the VOC's financial collapse, its territorial power was limited largely to Java, but under rule from the Netherlands through the ministry of colonies in the nineteenth century, Dutch territorial power slowly expanded into the hinterlands of the coast settlements in the archipelago' (Taylor 1983: xxi). By the late nineteenth century, the NEI had a powerful and effective colonial government which reached into most of the territory that now comprises the Indonesian nation. Local elites were exposed to new post-Enlightenment ideas through the opening up of European education to 'natives' as a consequence of a shift in colonial policy in the early twentieth century, when a new liberal government in the Netherlands endeavoured to redress previous exploitation through the so-called Ethical Policy. Drawing on Enlightenment values of liberty, self-expression and social justice, this educated elite criticized the colonial situation and the idea of national independence crystallized: fighting 'Western influence with Western weapons' (Pluvier 1953: 8, cited in Wieringa 2002: 53).

The Indonesian nationalist movement comprised many organizations whose ideological charter for an independent Indonesia varied from secular nationalism, rooted in liberal thought, to socialism/communism, Islam and also feminism. The author, Adi Negoro, wrote in 1939 that Indonesian 'feminism was born in the twentieth century, as the younger full sister of Indonesian nationalism' (cited in Vreede-de Stuers 1960: 67). The influence of feminist ideals

from Europe and new Islamic ideals for organizing women occurred simultaneously with the development of national consciousness. Women organized as self-identified groups whose political agendas influenced the imagining of the social form of the new nation.

Improved transport in the late nineteenth century allowed a new ease of passage to the Middle East, and Islam became associated with the nationalist struggle. Before the consciousness of 'nation' developed, Islam was the source of a critique of the colonial regime, conceived in moral terms (Anderson 1990). The first group to begin pressing the political and economic rights of 'natives' was an organization of Muslim traders, Sarekat Dagang Islam (formed 1911), in which women were active (Wieringa 2002: 33). Many Indonesian Muslims embraced Islamic reformism, the movement that claimed to 'purify the teachings of Islam, based on the Holy Qur'an, from the accumulation of local Indonesian teaching and custom' (Baried 1986: 191). Indonesian modernist Islam was quick to organize women and challenge traditional elite notions of domesticated femininity (Jahroni 2002) and Islam inflected the social and political contestation over gender relations and gendered citizenship. Indeed, the intersection of organized Islam, political parties and the state are fundamental to 'an adequate analysis of the position of women in Muslim societies' (Kandiyoti 1991: 2).[1]

In common with many nationalist movements in the early twentieth century, Indonesian nationalism was a modernizing movement, incorporating ideas of natural rights. It drew on a post-Enlightenment ideal of abstract humanism, concerned with defining citizenship and deploying universalizing terms like '*manusia*' (humankind), seen as a counter to communalisms that potentially threatened the national project. Unlike the older Indian independence movement, where women's rights were championed by men (but as an aspect of the modernity they embraced [Chatterjee 1993; see also Jayawardena 1986]), in the NEI, demands for women's equal rights came from women themselves. Many of the leading women had been exposed to, and participated in, the circuits of feminist thought from the end of the nineteenth century.

However, as in India, women's claims received support from male leaders. Sukarno, the nationalist leader who became the founding president of the republic, represented the role of women in the nationalist struggle through the analogy of a bird: 'one wing was male, the other female: the bird could not fly if either of its wings were broken' (cited in Brown 1981: n. 14). Transforming women's role within marriage and the family was linked to the revamping of traditional institutions seen as *feodal* (pertaining to customs of former unequal and repressive societies).

Through successive women's congresses (see below) politicized women pursued specifically feminist claims, in the sense of making demands in the name of women as a group, as well as mobilizing women in the anti-colonial struggle. Indonesian women focused on the importance of education for women as the basis for social participation outside the private world of the family as well as improved motherhood. Some groups demanded protection by the state

from sexual and labour exploitation. Politicized women expressed their aspiration that the independent republic embrace family and personal life within the sphere of civil society regulated by government, rather than in a private domain outside the realm of government regulation. Colonial law had left personal law to *adat* (custom) and religion. Most contentious were demands for equal rights in the family, in particular women's rights to free choice marriage and to initiate divorce (Vreede-de Stuers 1960; Jayawardena 1986). Such claims were divisive of politicized women as they were offensive to Islamic organizations, which did not countenance a role for the state in the ordering of family life.

Anderson's (1983) path-breaking work on nationalism grew out of his 1972 history of the Indonesian national revolution. It shifted the historical study of nationalism from a concern with the making of states and definitions of citizenship to a recognition of the political and cultural factors that allowed nations to emerge as 'imagined communities' in specific historical contexts from the late eighteenth century. However, 'he did not acknowledge that women and men may imagine such communities, identify with nationalist movements, and participate in state formations in very different ways,' (Hall *et al*. 1993: 159). Indeed, the standard Western treatises on Indonesian politics and history are largely silent on the women's contribution to the nationalist struggle (see Dobbin 1979; Taylor 1997a). It is not that women played no role in the nationalist struggle: the Indonesian official histories, which are mainly of the 'great man' variety, name several women as heroines, although the most popular are 'warrior queens' of distant history, who have a mythic quality. Two national days celebrating women's contribution (discussed below) are part of the corpus of national myth. The nation itself is feminized in one of the commonly invoked metaphors for nation: Ibu Pertiwi, or 'Mother Earth'.

## Kartini—a contested national symbol

Indonesia celebrates its nationhood in a number of national holidays, the most important being August 17, the day that Sukarno proclaimed Indonesia's independence in 1945. Two national days memorialize the contribution of women to the nation: April 21, celebrated as Hari Kartini (Kartini Day), commemorates the life of a nineteenth-century woman who expressed both feminist and anti-colonial sentiments; and December 22, celebrated as Hari Ibu (Mother's Day), commemorates the anniversary of the first all-Indonesian Women's Congress in 1928. Kartini Day was instituted by the 1938 Women's Congress, and Mother's Day in 1953, on its twenty-fifth anniversary. During Suharto's New Order, the manner of celebrating both these days eclipsed the contribution that women made to the struggle for the new nation, and their claims for an equitable gender regime. Instead, these national days were used to promote images of domesticated femininity. Let us first investigate the life and writings of Kartini, a Javanese woman who engaged on an international level with feminist debates of the late nineteenth century, and who truly deserves an international

reputation as a feminist, rather than her more localized representation as a saintly symbol of suffering motherhood.

Raden Ajeng Kartini lived in the last decades of the nineteenth century and described herself as coming from a 'noble and highly placed family—a chain of regents from Java's eastern coast to the middle' (cited in Zain'uddin 1986: 1). She led an essentially tragic life: a high-born woman who was expected to spend her adolescent years in seclusion ('stabling' or *pingitan*) until such times as her family arranged a marriage for her. Kartini's father, in an unusually liberal step, allowed her to attend the local primary school (usually reserved for Dutch and Eurasian children). Her rudimentary education in Dutch opened up a new world which she pursued through friendships with women of Dutch colonial families, and in correspondence with women in the Netherlands. Through them she was exposed to feminist aspirations, including women's education and women's suffrage. She became an articulate and skilful writer in Dutch, and published several articles in European feminist journals. Kartini and her sister, Rukmini, assisted Dutch feminists in preparing an exhibition of Javanese women's work for the Dutch National Exhibition of Women's Labour held in the Netherlands, in 1898, in honour of Queen Wilhelmina's coronation (Grever and Waaldijk 2004). Kartini aspired to pursue her own education and to avoid marriage, particularly an arranged and/or polygamous union, as was common in her social class. She was unable to avoid her fate: her parents arranged a marriage to a much older man of similar social standing to her father who was (unknown to her) polygamous. Kartini found herself achieving her desire to teach by opening a school that catered for the children of her husband's minor wives. She tragically died at the age of 24 after giving birth to a male child.

The colonial official Abendanon (whose wife had corresponded with Kartini) posthumously published some of her letters in 1911. Malay-language summaries were published in the weekly women's magazine *Soenting Melajoe* (Vreede-de Stuers 1987: 55). Despite being heavily edited and (certainly in the English translation) presented as the romanticized life of a tragic heroine, her writings, especially her thoughts on education, gave a powerful impetus to sections of the Indonesian women's movement. Two years after the publication of her letters, Indonesian women opened eponomous schools. She was elevated to the status of a nationalist heroine by Sukarno in 1964. On the national holiday celebrating her life and the nationalist struggle, pilgrims attend her grave in Rembang and schoolchildren sing the anthem 'Ibu Kita Kartini' (Our Mother Kartini).

Reading new editions of her letters, free of the editing carried out by Abendanon and later compilers, it is clear that she was critical of many aspects of Dutch colonialism, while enjoying the company of many Dutch intellectuals who beat a path to the door of the two sisters who were renowned for their acuity and breadth of knowledge (see for example Coté 1992). She describes in a sarcastic tone, for example, the efforts of Dutch colonial officials to embrace the status-conferring behaviours of the Javanese court as props to their assumed superiority. She writes of her dream of the day when her 'native world' would be emancipated (Coté 1992: 59). In fact, the new editions of the letters reveal

her to be a feminist intellectual abreast of European social thought, and with a modernist commitment to equity and social justice. It is not going too far to say that this largely self-educated young woman who led an extremely sheltered life can be seen as an Indonesian Mary Wollstonecraft, who was in a similar manner ahead of her time in her thinking on issues of equity for women and her countrymen. Kartini was a young woman on the cusp of modernity, who embodied the contradictory pressures of a modernist commitment to individual rights, and the idea of individual self-realization—at odds with her desire to act out of filial piety and love for her father.

The reworking of Kartini's life story in the official Indonesian accounts published during the New Order had the effect of diluting her feminist credentials (Tiwon 1996). The young woman who declared to her correspondents in the Netherlands that she never wanted to marry is presented in the Indonesian biography and translation of her letters as arguing that she did not want an arranged marriage. Her transformation into a model for the contemporary Indonesian woman is completed by her designation as Ibu Kartini (*ibu* literally 'mother'). According to Ailsa Zain'uddin (1986: 271), Sukarno is said to have changed the original words of the song celebrating her from 'Raden Ajeng Kartini', her title prior to marriage, because it emphasized her status as an unmarried woman. Hari Kartini is typically celebrated in competitions where young women and girls dress up in a batik wrapped skirt and *kebaya*, in Kartini 'look alike' competitions. The writer and journalist, Aristides Katoppo, recounted to me that a group of young women in his class at the University of Indonesia asked to leave early to begin the elaborate preparation of dressing up on Hari Kartini. He was struck by the irony that young women who had achieved Kartini's goal of education would value it less than an empty ritual celebration of feminine beauty—and he refused their request. Kartini has also been used to symbolize other kinds of femininity. In Sukarno's Guided Democracy, her photo was paired with that of Sukarno in school classrooms: the mother and father of the nation (Shiraishi 1997: 91). For the communist-affiliated women's mass organization in the post-independence period (Gerwani), she was a 'brilliant, rebellious woman and a fighter for the right to education for women' (Wieringa 2002: 47). Their account stressed the 'working class' background of her real mother.

Kartini's letters present a young intellectual who reflected on social inequity. Her contemporary saintly myth presents her as a mother who died in suffering. Indeed, one has to wonder if the basis of the contemporary sanctification of Kartini is her suffering, especially her suffering as a mother. Her life has provided the raw material of myth-making for contested symbols of gender relations. However we evaluate her direct contribution to nationalist and feminist campaigns, the sentiments expressed by Kartini in her writings reflect the same aspirations as the politicized women of the nationalist movement.

## Kartini's legacy

Kartini's letters set out an agenda that was taken up by emerging secular nationalist women's organizations. The dissemination of her ideas galvanized women

activists around the issue of education: it was seen as the principal avenue to 'modernity' and the uplifting of their status. In 1904, Dewi Sartika established the first of a number of schools for girls in Bandung (West Java). Many other schools for girls sprang up, some named after Kartini. A woman graduate from one of Dewi Sartika's schools commented:

> I am a true child of the Kartini movement. My mother is a descendant of a royal court of Solo, but as she didn't have much economic security there she moved to Malang where she set up a *batik* [wax-resist dyeing] factory. She encouraged me very much in all my school activities. I was the first girl in town to go to school on a bicycle and I was very proud of that. In the 1920s I went to Surabaya and studied economics and bookkeeping . . . Nationalism and the liberation of women were our ideals. We kept talking to each other about Fourier, who had said that the extent of the measure of freedom a people enjoys can be judged by the freedom its women enjoy (cited in Wieringa 2002: 64).

Midwifery training in Batavia was also attributed to her influence (Boissevain 1915: 16).

The women's education movement was part of a nationalist campaign to improve 'native' education.[2] Education was singled out by all of the nine prominent women who wrote submissions on 'the improvement of the position of the Indonesian woman' to the colonial Inquiry into the Declining Welfare of the Native Population in 1914 (Vreede-de Stuers 1960: 174–5; Blackburn 2004). Women were especially poorly represented in government-funded schools, so the Kartini-inspired education movement was regarded as a particularly significant step towards 'emancipation' (see Vreede-de Stuers 1960: 69–70). From the 1920s, popular education suffered from increased government restrictions on nationalist organizations, especially a 1932 regulation requiring government permission to establish private schools without government subsidy (the Wild Schools Ordinance). However, a campaign by nationalist groups led to the suspension of the ordinance after only a few months (Ricklefs 1981: 180).

Kartini's other principal concern, women's rights in marriage, soon became a signature of the women's movement. The first Javanese women's organization, Putri Mardika (Free Woman), formed in 1912. It was associated with Budi Utomo (Noble Endeavour), which had been founded in 1911 and is generally regarded as the 'first quickening' of the nationalist movement (O'Malley 1980: 601). Putri Mardika published a magazine that took up the issues of child marriage, polygamy and forced marriage: 'If only our association could help to bring to an end . . . this custom of ours which allows young girls, scarcely out of infancy, to be forced to marry a man they do not know and even a man who they cannot love' (Mrs Abdoerachman cited in Vreede-de Stuers 1960: 63). Putri Mardika was interested in the international feminist movement, for example, publishing an article on the 1919 Feminist Congress in Paris (Vreede-de Stuers 1960: 62). These elite women also took 'action on behalf of women workers and prostitutes and against the traffic in women . . .'. In West Java, the

women's associations Madjoe Kemoelian (Progress and Honour) in Bandung and Hati Soetji (Pure Heart) spoke out against this 'evil' (Wieringa 2002: 66).

Kartini's critique of the repressive life conditions of elite women, struck a responsive chord for many of them, who were more restricted in their movements than lower class women who had to work. In 1918, Mrs Mangoenkoesoemo, wife of the founder of Budi Utomo, commented favourably on 'the sharing of responsibilities, the husband valuing the opinions of his wife' which she saw in peasant households, compared to the conditions of her own (noble) class (*priyayi*) where the wife is just 'the first among servants'. The concept of equality advocated by European women was 'alluring', the idea that a wife's opinion would be 'sought first by the husband, and accepted as equal to his'. Since Kartini, she felt, 'our voices have been heard' (cited in Wieringa 2002: 33).

The memberships of the pre-World War II women's movement and specifically nationalist groups overlapped considerably since many women belonged to several organizations. Women were also active in the political parties that were forming in the 1920s (like the Nationalist Party [PNI] and the Communist Party [PKI]). Women rarely held leadership positions in parties, but came to prominence as leaders of women's organizations which were very active in the years leading up to independence.

These early Indonesian feminists were in the mould of what Kumari Jayawardena (1986) describes as bourgeois reformers. Like the male leaders of the nationalist movement they came from elite families, and their interests were in many ways unlike those of non-elite women in the rural areas and the cities. They were the product of different cultural traditions with regard to femininity than the mass of peasant and working-class women. Their culture of femininity stressed seclusion in the home until an early arranged marriage, exemplified in the life of Kartini.

## Organizing Muslim women

Islam also was impacted by the modernizing spirit of the early twentieth century and 'the Islamic movement for women's progress developed in one path with Islamic renewal' (Burhanudin and Fathurahman 2004: 11).[3] Modernists saw Islam as providing the basis for women's emancipation (ibid: 9). The best-known (and still largest) Indonesian Islamic reformist organization is Muhammadiyah, established in 1912 by Kiai Haji (KH) Ahmad Dachlan. Linked to both Budi Utomo and Sarekat Dagang Islam (Korver 1982), it soon came to support the independence struggle. Its fundamental principle is adherence to '*amar ma'ruf nahi munkar*,' community action to make Islamic principles operative in society.

KH Ahmad Dachlan wanted the organization to have a 'women's department' and he set up courses on religious instruction for women organized under the name Sopo Tresno (Those Who Love) (Baried 1986). The name was changed to Aisyiyah (the wife of the Prophet) in 1917, and KH Ahmad Dachlan's third wife, Nyai Siti Walidah Ahmad Dachlan, became its leader (Jahroni 2002). However,

Ismah Salman (2005), a contemporary female Muhammadiyah leader, asserts that it was Siti Walidah, herself the daughter of a *kiai* (Islamic scholar) and educated in the scriptures, who established Sopo Tresno (see also Burhanudin and Fathurahman 2004: 21). Aisyiyah's principal activity involved the radical step of expanding religious education for women, through establishing a woman's mosque, Qu'ran reading groups, and publishing religious pamphlets and magazines. Aisyiyah shared the agenda of secular organizations in promoting women's education and an expanded role for women. Its activities soon grew to include secular education for women, and to encourage women to participate in public life, in addition to their obligation to bear and raise children, as ordained by Islam. Its educational and welfare activities included running kindergartens and establishing vocational schools for girls in home economics, teaching and midwifery. By 1930, it had expanded beyond its base in Yogyakarta, Central Java, with 32 schools and 75 teachers. Five thousand women from 137 branches attended the Muhammadiyah Congress that year (Nizar 2002: 81–2; Wieringa 2002: 67). Aisyiyah, like secular women's organizations, began among the urban, modernizing elite (Burhanudin and Fathurahman 2004). But while secular nationalist organizations and the associated women's groups tended to represent the few educated elites, in contrast, Islamic organizations and their women's sections developed a mass base. Aisyiyah joined with other women's organizations in the series of women's congresses (see below) through which they pursued common goals in the field of education.

Aisyiyah activities brought the secluded Islamic women of Yogyakarta's *kauman* (the Islamic quarter near the *kraton*) out of their homes. Even more radical, Islamic education provided the basis for women to become preachers (*mubalighat*) and prayer leaders to other women. Muhammadiyah also introduced the practice of women wearing the *kerudung* or head scarf and *jilbab* or short veil covering the head and neck, and of curtaining women from men in public spaces, including in the mosque. Sukarno and his wife were reported to have left a Muhammadiyah meeting in disgust, because a curtain was erected to separate men from women (Blackburn 2004: 102, n. 59) which he argued was a symbol of slavery. According to Vreede-de Stuers (1960: 65), Aisyiyah took its membership from the middle class, as opposed to the elite membership base of the other women's organizations. The strategy of using women's *pengajian* (religious study) groups as a strategy to increase their confidence and a springboard for entry into public life is still used by women's groups today (see Istiadah 1995; Siahaan 2004).

Aisyiyah ideology nonetheless emphasized the subordination of women to their husbands. Baried, a one-time president, argued that it enabled women to recognize their most important duty is in the home. 'After having managed the household successfully she will realize that she has to do the same to her society. The most suitable place to do that is in organizations' (cited in Wieringa 2002: 124).

Another important Islamic educational innovation was the school established in West Sumatra (an intensive site of Islamic modernization[4]) in 1923 by Rahmah el-Yunusiah for 'modern women who embody the spirit of Islam'. She attracted

students from Malaysia and the Philippines, and was visited by the rector of Al-Azhar University in Cairo who established schools based on her model (Bachtiar 1992: 16). Like Kartini, she regarded education as critical for improving women's social position (Burhanudin and Fathurahman 2004: 19, see also Vreede-de Stuers 1987).

Islamic women's organizations did not share the concern to combat polygamy (Wieringa 2002: 67). This has been a divisive issue between secular and Islamic organizations, but also a source of division among pious Muslim women. The Enquiry into the Decline in the Welfare of Java and Madura in 1914 received some submissions to the sub-report on the Improvement in the Position of Indonesian Women from *santri* (observant Muslim) women who were critical of what they saw as abuses of women in practices justified in the name of Islam. An article published in the magazine of the Young Muslims, *El Fajar*, in 1927, typifies the reforming tendencies of this period:

> I am therefore persuaded that I am not acting against the spirit of Islam in expressing the opinion that we must, by all possible means, oppose polygamy such as it is practiced in our time and in our country . . . the best method of combating polygamy is to be found in a careful study of Islam itself (cited in Vreede-de Stuers 1976: 83).

This early twentieth-century opinion exhibits the same oppositional basis from within Islam and the arguments for diverse interpretations of Islamic law that we currently see in women's resistance to a contemporary resurgence of polygamy (discussed in Chapter 7).

## The 1928 Women's Congress

Mother's Day (Hari Ibu) commemorates the first congress that brought together the growing number of women's organizations. The Women's Congress involved 31 organizations from secular nationalist, Muslim and Christian women's groups.[5] It canvassed issues of women's rights under traditional and Islamic law, and discussed polygamy, age at marriage, and free choice marriage.

The Women's Congress was held on December 22, 1928—17 years before the nationalists claimed their independence. However, importantly it was held two months after the important Youth Congress which gave rise to the Youth Pledge that provided the ideological basis for the nationalist struggle:

> *Kami putra dan puteri Indonesia mengaku bertumpah darah yang satu, Tanah Indonesia. Kami putra dan putri Indonesia mengaku berbangsa yang satu, Bangsa Indonesia. Kami putera dan puteri Indonesia menjunjung bahasa persatuan, bahasa Indonesia* (Alisjahbana 1957: 34, cited in Pabottinggi 1990: 20, n. 17). [We the sons and daughters of Indonesia acknowledge one nation—Indonesia; one nationality—Indonesian; one unifying language—Indonesian.]

In its original formulation, it repeats the phrase '*kami putra dan putri*'—'we the sons and daughters'. That the careful gender balance is not acknowledged in standard Western historical writings indicates the consciousness of male and female colonial subjects in the struggle for independence.[6] In a further indication of a 'feminist' consciousness, a young male delegate addressed the congress on the position of women, arguing that polygamy 'must be overthrown' (cited in Vreede-de Stuers 1960: 68).

In 1978, Mrs Sujatin Kartowijono, one of the organizers of the 1928 Women's Congress, recalled her feelings at the time: her pride in the national flag and national anthem revealed at the Youth Congress. 'After the Youth Pledge exploded upon us, we felt that women as a group needed to be aroused from their still passive situation and given a nationalist spirit. Hence, the organization Putri Indonesia (Daughters of Indonesia) decided to set up a meeting between women.' She approached leading figures in the nationalist movement who supported the idea. The congress displayed the Indonesian flag (the 'red and white' *merah putih*) and Indonesian was used in parts of the proceedings, and the final statement (*uraian*) (Kartowijono 1978: 73).

The necessity and right of the state to intervene in Muslim marriage was the most contentious issue discussed. Ali Sastroamijoyo, a future Prime Minister of Indonesia, told the congress that Muslims had 'the right to marry without the intermediary of a government official, provided that all the conditions of the Islamic law (*fiqh*) were fulfilled' (Vreede-de Stuers 1976: 80). Siti Sundari, a leading nationalist figure who edited the magazine *Wanito Sworo* (*Women's Voice*—founded in 1913), reported that she had received letters from women complaining about polygamy and arbitrary repudiation. She told the 1928 Congress: 'Polygamy, child marriages, repudiation and divorces are unlimited in number. . . . When a woman's independence disappears in marriage . . . it signifies the failure of the emancipation of our people' (Vreede-de Stuers 1976: 83). An improvement in rights for women was linked to the broader goals of the nascent nationalist movement.

There were three resolutions from the congress: a request that the government require the *penghulu* (celebrant) to explain the meaning of conditional divorce (*taklik talak*)[7] following the marriage contract (*nikah*); a request for an increase in the number of girls' schools; and that the government give assistance to widows and orphans of civil servants. Baried (the head of Aisyiyah in the 1980s) commented:

> This first Indonesian women's congress . . . marked the emergence of both corporate and co-operative awareness among Indonesian women. This awareness was built on an awakening of nationality as well. At that time, women's unity in Indonesia was not feminist in the sense of being confrontationist, but a women's movement aimed both at the development of Indonesian women and the achieving of Indonesian independence (Baried 1986: 193).

The subsequent 1929 Congress heard that the government had favourably received the proposals. According to the Dutch orientalist, De Kat Angelino, the government had 'instructed those who deal with matrimonial affairs to explain, wherever needed, to the bride's *wali* at the conclusion of the marriage, the meaning of conditional divorce' (cited in Vreede-de Stuers 1960: 90). That is, the colonial government made a 'weak' response to the women's demand.

The congress formed a federation, Perikatan Perempuan Indonesia (The Federation of Indonesian Women). It met on a regular (almost annual) basis until the Japanese occupation, changing its name and constitution but retaining its character as an umbrella organization for the diverse groups representing women's interest (see Blackburn 2004). Despite the historical connection to the events of the Youth Pledge, initially the Women's Congress did not take up an explicitly nationalist position. While they focused on women's issues, marriage law reform dogged the alliance, and some subsequent congresses avoided the issue altogether, lest Islamic women be alienated. However, contrary to its celebration as a symbol of maternalism under the New Order, the participating women set in place an agenda that indicated complex and contested views of motherhood, and challenged comfortable assignations of masculine authority and power.

## Division over polygamy[8]

The marriage law activist Nani Soewondo says that tensions between Christian and Muslim groups prevented the 1928 congress from accepting stronger proposals in regard to marriage rights (cited in Wieringa 2002: 74). In particular, the question of polygamy was divisive and Islamic women's groups could not be freed from the positions of their parent organizations and so they publicly supported the practice as a right guaranteed by religion. This was in spite of the fact that some of the Muslim women leaders as individuals were anti-polygamy. Soenarjo Mangunpospito attended the 1928 congress as a member of Aisyiyah, and later joined Muslimat (the post-World War II women's organization associated with the Islamic mass organization Nahdlatul Ulama). She commented: 'Personally I have never agreed with polygamy. I would never have allowed it. But, it is a religious rule, so what can we say against it?' Another Aisyiyah member commented:

> As Aisyiyah women, it was our duty to make clear what Islam really means. Polygamy is a religious rule, we couldn't change that. But we did feel that it didn't give men license to take one woman after another. It should not be abused! Men have to adhere strictly to the conditions under which it is allowed. Now if a wife does not get any children, yes, then it was necessary. But if not . . . then he is just fooling around. Religion doesn't allow that.

Invoking the symbolic representation of women as emotional, in contrast to men's rationality, she went on: 'On the other hand, it is a good thing that

women are not allowed to divorce their husbands. Women are such emotional beings. They are too unstable, they would ask for it too soon' (cited in Wieringa 2002: 67).

Following the failure to reach agreement on polygamy at the 1928 Congress, an anti-polygamy stance was a foundational principle of the radical nationalist group Isteri Sedar (IS—Aware Women) established in Bandung (West Java) in 1930, under the leadership of Soewarni Pringgodigdo. Its members argued that a women's federation was limited in its ability to effect change because of the necessity of compromise on marriage reform, and they refused to attend the 1930 Congress because they could not get polygamy and divorce on the agenda. IS did sent delegates to an all-Asia women's congress in Lahore, however, which adopted an anti-polygamy stance. A 1931 IS congress recommended an Ataturk-style abolition of polygamy. This strong initiative was countered by the formation of a Muslim women's association, Sarekat Istri Jakarta, which condemned the anti-polygamy resolutions of IS and the Lahore congress (Vreede-de Stuers 1960: 91; see also Burhanudin and Fathurahman 2004: 43).

Several secular women's organizations formed Isteri Indonesia (Indonesian Women) in 1932 under the leadership of the marriage reformer, Maria Ulfah Santoso, who commented:

> We of Isteri Indonesia were more accommodating to the Islamic women than Isteri Sedar. I also wanted monogamy but I didn't want to antagonize all Islamic women. After all, we still needed them to struggle for independence. That's why I proposed the *ta'lik* [the provisional divorce set out in the marriage contract, supported by the 1928 Congress]. In that way they could stay within the Qur'an. It is futile to try to persuade the Islamic women's groups to accept monogamy; ultimately they will all follow their men anyhow (Wieringa 2002: 77).

Maria Ulfah Santoso reported the conclusions of The Commission to Investigate Marriage Laws (set up at the 1935 Congress) to the 1938 congress.[9] She was one of the first Indonesian women to receive a law degree from a Dutch university (in 1933) and was a leading nationalist as well as feminist figure—the first in a line of distinguished women lawyers who have had a significant role in law reform as a basis for women's rights. Her two-hour speech to the congress set the agenda for the discussion of marriage law reform for following years (Vreede-de Stuers 1976: 83). The principal recommendations were: (1) before the husband delivers the *talak* (unilateral repudiation divorce), the couple should present themselves before the *penghulu* (official) who should attempt to reconcile them; (2) the Religious Council (Raad Agama) must have the power to annul any *talak* uttered in a casual manner, prior to the reconciliation hearing before the *penghulu*; (3) the *penghulu* must explain fully the implications of the conditions of the *taklik talak* (conditional divorce in the marriage contract); and (4) the form of the *taklik talak* should be comprehensive as a basis for a divorce initiated by the woman. Maria Ulfah Santoso suggested the wording of a

condition for divorce 'where there is insurmountable disagreement between the parties' which Vreede-de Stuers describes as a 'sign of a remarkable evolution in women's consciousness' (ibid.: 85).

Maria Ulfah Santoso persuaded the 1938 congress to support a modern marriage law that would not violate Islamic law. They agreed to set up a drafting committee that she would chair:

> We had to find a way to protect the Islamic women in marriage. A major issue was that the Colonial Government didn't pay a wage to the *penghulu* (Islamic Officials). They derived their income from marriages and divorces, so they were interested in as many divorces as possible. The priests and vicars did get a salary, so they were independent (cited in Wieringa 2002: 73).

For Maria Ulfah Santoso, the issue was a very personal one. Her own passion to become a lawyer stemmed from an early consciousness of the lack of women's rights in marriage:

> Why was I attracted to Law? Because when I was a teenage girl I saw the suffering of women who were *dimadu* [husbands taking a second wife] or divorced for *no reason* [italics in original]. Usually such a woman was taken back to her parents with excuse for a rest but afterwards she was sent divorce papers, and that was the end of the matter (*perkara*). There was no way for her to defend herself; she just had to accept it, like that. At that time, few girls were educated . . . after being divorced she would become a burden on her parents who usually felt ashamed to have a daughter who was a divorcee. She lives as a person who had no value (Ulfah Subadio 1978a: 46–7).[10]

While the 1941 congress (on the eve of the Pacific War) was able to bring the broad range of women's groups together in a spirit of nationalism, the issue of marriage law reform still divided Muslim women (especially the Minangkabau (West Sumatra) group Persatuan Muslim Indonesia—Permi) from the radical anti-polygamy group, represented by IS. A veiled Ratna Sari of Permi defended polygamy as 'women's duty'. Soewarni Pringgodigno of IS responded angrily that she could not accept that. 'Men are like cocks who want to have hens all over the place.' The men present giggled and made hen noises which prompted the IS women to walk out (Wieringa 2002: 78).

## Which women?

The groups associated with the 'bourgeois reformers' of the pre-independence women's movement had small urban-based memberships and their achievements in regard to education, marriage and women's representation in politics mainly assisted elite women (Vreede-de Stuers 1960: 98), but there were important

figures in both secular and religious organizations who reached out to working and peasant women. Maria Ulfah Santoso was in a group that organized sewing lessons as a way to attract women to classes on literacy, marriage rights and child care. She says:

> in one of these groups I first proposed my idea of instituting the *ta'lik-at-talak*, a set of conditions to the marriage contract which, if violated by her husband, would immediately grant a woman the right of divorce. The Qur'an allows for this, but it was never done in those years (Wieringa 2002: 73).

Trafficking and forced prostitution were important issues for many secular organizations, and were addressed at the 1930 Women's Congress. Indonesian groups attended the League of Nations International Conference on the Traffic in Women and Children in the Far East in Bandung in 1938 (Soewondo 1981: 177). A former member of IS remembered their campaign against trafficking:

> There were traders, men who gave parents lots of money to marry their young daughters. The peasants were so poor they would do anything to pay their debts. When these men had collected ten or so girls, they would leave for Jakarta or Singapore and sell them there. We had to expose those guys, collect proof to have them arrested. Sometimes we rescued the girls from the boats. In 1935 I even went to Singapore myself (cited in Wieringa 2002: 72).

The 1935 Women's Congress undertook to investigate women's employment. The first women's trade union was established in 1940. IS investigated the work conditions of bonded labourers in the batik industry. Sujatin remembered the campaign:

> In Lasem we tried to expose the Chinese and Arab *batik* traders. They had beautiful houses out front but at the back dirty and dangerous *batik* workshops . . . where the women worked for abysmally low wages. However hard they worked their debts were never cleared, so they were forced to stay inside. When they got pregnant they were sent away. We . . . organized lectures to make the women conscious of their rights and to expose the terrible things that they saw (cited in Wieringa 2002: 72).

The Islamic organizations (most notably Aisyiyah but also some regional organizations) reached out to a mass base of women organized around religious groups (*pengajian*) but also through education, health and social services. While not supporting marriage law reform, Aisyiyah set up marriage bureaus to deal with gender inequalities in marriage (Istiadah 1995). The question of marriage law reform continued to be a sensitive one with potential to drive a wedge between secular and religious organizations.

## Women's organizations and national independence

In 1929, an IS meeting in Bandung was addressed by a young Sukarno (the nationalist leader who became the founding president in 1945): he invoked a powerful symbol from the Javanese *wayang* shadow puppet theatre in urging women to take up the warrior spirit of Srikandi, the wife of Arjuna in the Javanese version of the Mahabharata, and fight for the nationalist cause (Vreede-de Stuers 1960: 90; see Brown 1981: 76–7 for Sukarno's speech to IS).[11] She was contrasted to Arjuna's meek wife, Sambudra, who is identified with the household. The figure of Srikandi became a recurrent symbol used by the women's and nationalist movements. Sukarno had been disappointed that the 1928 Women's Congress was not nationalist in its stance (Wieringa 2002: 71). In his view, capitalist colonialism, and not indigenous social and cultural practices, was the cause of women's oppression and 'the position of women in Indonesian society could only be improved through the attainment of national independence, and not through any internal change to the social and political order' (Brown 1981: 90). He differentiated two types of women's organization: one concerned principally with womanly activities such as housewifery, craft and motherhood; the other concerned with women's emancipation, and equal rights for women with men (Brown 1981: 71). In fact many of the organizations manifested both these agendas (such as Gerwani, described below).

The colonial government became increasingly ambivalent about the women's movement as the century progressed and there was more conflict between the government and nationalist groups. Several leading nationalist organizations were banned in the 1920s and activist women were caught up in the net: prominent leaders like S. K. Trimurti and Rasuna Said were jailed (Wieringa 2002: 78). The growing climate of repression led to further growth of nationalist feeling.

Nationalism proved the bridge between IS and the federated women's groups. Suwarni Pringgodigdo of IS urged women at the 1932 Congress that only independence would bring full equality for women. She drew a sympathetic response: IS was invited to join the 1933 Congress which formally expressed support for the nationalist movement (Wieringa 2002: 76–7). Subsequent congresses in 1935 and 1941 reaffirmed support for independence. Women's groups actively contributed to debates about the social reforms which were necessary to the national revolution including women's citizenship rights. Suffrage was not initially an issue for the politicized 'native' women in the colonies: under conditions of colonial rule, where elected bodies had little power, it did not seem relevant (see Blackburn 1999; 2004). However, a broader concept of women's political rights was an issue. The Women's Congress did express opposition to a colonial law prohibiting women from becoming village heads, which was regarded as contradictory to *adat* which they argued did not ban women from political office.

While several women had been elected to local councils, the colonial government denied women the right to vote: the 1938 Congress protested this as a diminution of the political rights women had under *adat* (Vreede-de Stuers 1960:

94–5). There were further protests in 1939 when Maria Ulfah was proposed as a member of the colonial body, the People's Council, but the colonial government appointed a Dutch woman. Voting rights became a more important issue in the 1940s, especially as the colony moved towards independence and the constitution of the independent republic established universal suffrage. The 1938 Congress put women's suffrage on its agenda, but they only received support from the male members of the nationalist movement in 1941 (Blackburn 2004: 88).

A number of activists from the women's movement were members of the preparation body for national independence and were able to put basic demands for women's citizenship (Rasid 1982). The constitution of the new republic (declared in 1945) guarantees equal rights for men and women, including the right to vote and equal rights to education (Sumbung 1984).

## Women's activities in the transition to independence

The Japanese advance into Southeast Asia led to Dutch surrender in March 1942. The Japanese occupation gave a boost to the nationalist movement: many of the parties that had been banned reconstituted themselves and new ones were formed. The Communist Party (banned in 1927 after an abortive rebellion) was re-established in 1945, and Sukarno's party, the PNI (banned in 1929), was revived in 1946. Women were active in both.

The nationalist movement had been limited to the educated middle class, but under Japanese rule, they achieved room to move. Sukarno was able to make radio broadcasts which built mass appeal. Young women (aged 15–20) were formed into fighting units, the Barisan Srikandi (Srikandi Troops, invoking the name of Arjuna's warrior wife), while men were drafted to form Heiho (auxiliary forces). Socialist women took advantage of Japanese military training and also 'collected rice for the freedom fighters and visited the men who were enlisted by the Japanese. [They] were suspicious, but we told them we discussed family affairs with them.' (cited in Wieringa 2002: 82).

The occupying Japanese dissolved the pre-war women's organizations and formed a single body—Fujinkai. Whereas many of the pre-war women's groups (especially those associated with secular nationalism) had progressive goals deriving from European liberal ideals, Fujinkai promoted conservative models of domesticated femininity. With its territorial organization, it resembled the official women's organizations later developed under the New Order (see Blackburn 2004: 20). However, some of the pre-war groups functioned clandestinely. For example, S. K. Trimurti was a prominent member of Fujinkai but also engaged in underground activities (Wieringa 2002: 82). The single organization brought women of different classes together, bridging the gap that had existed pre-war (Vreede-de Stuers 1960: 114). Fujinkai was disbanded at independence: the leaders, under Sunarjo Mangunpuspitoathy, transformed local branches into groups to fight for independence, renamed Persatuan Wanita Indonesia or Perwani (Indonesian Women's Federation). This body held the first congress in

independent Indonesia in December 1945, which resolved to 'form a rear-guard in defense of the nation's liberty' (ibid.).

Since the 1990s, stories have come to light concerning the effects of the Japanese occupation on Indonesian women, particularly the stories of sexual exploitation of the 'comfort women'. Young women were kidnapped and forced to provide sex for Japanese soldiers in military brothels (Ruff-O'Herne 1994). Only in 2001, did the Indonesian Human Rights lawyer Nursyahbani Katjasungkana successfully negotiate compensation for some of these women.

The Japanese surrender in 1945 left a power vacuum in the NEI. On 17 August, Sukarno and Hatta proclaimed Indonesia's independence. The Netherlands did not readily relinquish its claim and attempted to reassert its sovereignty with Allied assistance. The first four years of the republic's existence were dominated by 'warfare against powerful adversaries' (Kahin 1952: 145). Dobbin (1979) has commented that the histories of the armed struggle against the Dutch have mainly related the activities of male protagonists. The photographic record indicates that women played active roles in the revolution. The photograph of the founding of the new republic, showing the raising of the national flag, the *merah-putih* (red and white) on 17 August 1945, is almost always cropped to show a number of male protagonists in Western dress and one *sarong kebaya*-clad woman with her head covered by a scarf (who we can identify as S. K. Trimurti). Taylor describes an uncropped version of this photograph, which shows two other young women, seen from behind 'in short-sleeved Western frocks, their hair worn up and uncovered' (1997b: 99). She reads the presentation of these images as indicating that the men are staking a claim to the state through their adoption of Western dress, while the women 'demonstrate their association to the men seizing power and express an association of women with the past' (Taylor 1997b: 92). However, the matter of gendered costume also raises interesting class issues. In her biography of Maria Ulfah, Rasid (1982) notes that when this very modern young woman (who had lived on her own in The Netherlands to complete a law degree, and at the age of 22 had travelled alone around Europe before coming back to Indonesia) arrived in her native land, she abandoned Western dress and took to wearing the *sarong kebaya* as a sign of her identification with her homeland. Nationalist men took Western dress as a sign of their modernity.

Indonesian official publications on women, at least until the late 1960s, frequently featured heroic photos of women soldiers. For example, the cover of a 1968 pamphlet from the Department of Information, entitled 'Women's Movement in Indonesia', features a woman pilot climbing into the cockpit of her military aircraft (Republic of Indonesia 1968).

Such official histories identify famous anti-colonial heroines, most often of aristocratic birth, such as Cut Nya Din from Aceh and women rulers of the past like I Base, queen of Bontohiru in South Sulawesi (ibid.). Drawing on this trope of the 'warrior queen', a New Order publication that showcases women combatants mentions Tien Hartinah (who became Mrs Suharto) as a soldier, a leader of a 200-strong group, Laskyar Perempuan Indonesia (LPI) (Manus and Soejono 1992).

Many Indonesian women proudly recount their active role in the independence struggle (1945–9). The first women's fighting unit, established in Bandung in 1945, (Laskyar Wanita Indonesia (Laskwi), included many who had been in Barisan Srikandi. There were women's troops in Java, Central and South Sumatra, and Central and South Sulawesi (Wieringa 2002: 84). Women sewed uniforms and transported arms and information. Female units drove ambulances, cared for wounded soldiers, organized front-line kitchens, conducted literacy classes and acted as messengers. The following anonymous personal story is entitled 'A Mother and Revolutionary':

> Hatred toward the Dutch existed among my people long before I was born, but I got that feeling by the time I was eleven years old [in 1934]. Even though my own family had a good position in the colonial government, I wanted the Dutch out of Indonesia (Williams 1991: 208–9). . . . During the revolution my husband and I joined the guerillas to chase away the Dutch. We went to the place where the guerillas built their camp near Yogyakarta and volunteered. My husband became a soldier, and I became a cook . . . following the guerillas wherever they went. It was a really terrific experience. It is hard for someone born after independence to imagine how we felt. But if you were there at the time, you would have joined the guerrillas also. I saw my friends die in the fighting. I saw many people suffer in the war. Every time my husband went out to the front, I prayed that he would return alive. . . . In the minds of my children, they think I am a heroine on Indonesian independence. But I just did what I thought was right (ibid.: 211–12).

Experiences of women in the revolution were published in a 1999 book (Hadi Soewito 1999). One is told by a woman in South Sulawesi whose sex allowed her a narrow escape from an infamous slaughter of civilians. South Sulawesi put up strong resistance to Dutch efforts to reoccupy their colony and 'the notorious Captain Westerling' was employed to 'pacify' the region, and large numbers of civilians as well as guerillas were 'lined up and methodically executed by his firing squads' (Kahin 1952: 145). Republican authorities claimed nearly 30,000 were killed, while the Dutch counter with 4,000 victims. Sitti Hasanah Nu'mang describes her arrest, with her father and many others, for anti-government activities. After several days' imprisonment, they were led to a bus station and forced to squat, surrounded by soldiers. She refused to comply and remained standing. Her father and many others were shot, but as a female she was spared. She recounts a feisty confrontation with Westerling in which she responded to his taunt that she was a bandit, with the retort that he was the bandit. She was detained further in custody, and her story implies that she was raped while intoxicated, after being forced to drink alcohol by Dutch soldiers.

Soewito's book makes a small effort to 'reclaim' the women's history of the period, which has to a large extent been erased in both Western and official

Indonesian accounts. In 2001, I was invited to address the women's organization Dharma Wanita Persatuan at the Indonesian Embassy in Canberra and I chose to speak on the nationalist movement. I was anxious about telling a story they all knew, however the talk was received with excitement and interest, for example, one woman asked me for a copy to send her family because they were descendants of Dewi Sartika but she felt they did not know her achievements. In a recent discussion with some politically aware Indonesian post-graduate students, the name Maria Ulfah was recognized as the contemporary head of Fatayat NU, but they did not know of the feisty woman nationalist lawyer. Official histories, especially the myth of Gerwani violence as well as academic histories, have obscured women's contribution to the struggle for nation. Within Indonesia women's organizations are reclaiming this history, and books by foreign scholars Elizabeth Martyn (2005) and Saskia Wieringa (2002) are contributing to reclaiming the history of gender politics and women's activism in the 1950s—a period marked by tensions in the women's movement about the new state's role in regulating marriage.

## Gender politics in the new republic

A hotly contested issue for the nationalists was the form of the state—secular or Islamic—manifested in the debates among the women's groups over women's rights in marriage, and the role of the secular state in legitimating and dissolving marriages. Another ongoing tension in Indonesian politics has been between socially conservative and radical forces, manifested dramatically in the regime changes from Sukarno to Suharto, and to the current Reform era. At the time of independence, the socialist leader Sjahrir feared totalitarian tendencies from those who had collaborated with the Dutch and Japanese, whom he regarded as *feodal* or fascist. He saw a danger that the movement might focus only on independence and not give due regard to necessary social reform (Kahin 1952: 165). Political Islam has been associated with both socially radical and conservative positions—not the least in regard to gender politics.

Women's organizations sought to unify under the new republic. In 1946, Maria Ulfah Santoso and Sujatin Kartowijono, who had been an instigator of the 1928 congress, initiated the Kongres Wanita Indonesia or Kowani (Indonesian Women's Congress). Kowani demanded that the constitution guarantee equal rights, including that all citizens be guaranteed the right to work (Vreede de-Stuers 1960: 177). Policy groups worked on marriage reform (led by Maria Ulfah Santoso), employment (led by S. K. Trimurti) and health (led by J. Sulianti) (Vreede de-Stuers 1960: 114–16). Consensus on marriage law still eluded them, and the demand for an end to polygamy was again dropped in the interests of unity between Islamic and non-Islamic groups in the fight for independence. Kowani was transformed into a new federation also called Kongres Wanita Indonesia (KWI) after the internationally recognized transfer of sovereignty to the new republic in 1950 (see Martyn 2005).

## New mass women's organizations—Muslimat NU[12] and Gerwani

### *Muslimat NU*

The euphoria of independence was expressed through popular mobilization in people's organizations. The modernist Muslim organization Muhammadiyah had been 'matched' by the establishment of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) in 1926 to represent 'traditionalist' Islam. In theological terms, the difference relates to the stance with regard to the interpretation of the classical Islamic texts, with NU basing its teachings on the classical texts written in the first centuries following the death of the Prophet. Muhammadiyah, the parent organization of Aisyiyah, is a modernizing/reformist organization. In the Indonesian context, the important difference is that NU embraces Sufi elements and the accommodation of Islam to local culture. Openness has allowed NU to embrace new ideas, for example, issuing *fatwa* endorsing women riding bicycles and women's involvement in politics. NU is now the largest mass Islamic organization in Indonesia.

Initially women were not able to be members of NU, not only because of the assumption of their primary domestic roles, but also because it was felt that the Dutch repression of organizations in the late colonial period would put them at risk (Machrusah 2005: 22–3). However, this did not stop women's participation. At the 1939 NU Congress in Banten, nearly 8,000 women attended a meeting organized especially for them. They were addressed by a woman preacher, Nyi R. Djuaesih, who emphasized the importance of women's education (ibid.). NU is especially associated with the *pesantren* (or residential religious school) tradition, and in step with the climate of the times, many women were attending *pesantren*.[13] This was particularly true in Banten, hence the large numbers of women attending the congress. Subsequently, women's meetings became a regular feature of NU congresses, with women taking progressively more prominent roles, attending as delegates, separated behind the *tabir*. NU women resisted the *tabir* separating men and women in public meetings, and it was abandoned in 1959 (Machrusah 2005: 21–2). In 1940, women proposed the formal establishment of a permanent and active women's section. Their growing demands for recognition coincided with the Dutch surrender and the consequent national revolution. NU had at its outset accepted the Dutch administration on the condition that it allowed Muslims to practice their religion; however the Japanese occupation and the declaration of independence changed that, and they acknowledged the independent republic as legitimate (van Bruinessen 1994: 61) and even supported armed struggle (*jihad*) to defend it. This changed political climate impacted on gender relations in NU. The sixteenth NU Congress in 1946 delivered a *fatwa* legitimating women's participation in war. Women could wear uniforms as long as they covered their *aurat* (parts of the body which cannot be displayed publicly) (Masyhuri 1997: 204, cited in Machrusah 2005: 30). At this same congress, the establishment of Muslimat as a separate section of NU was finally received with acclamation. In the revolutionary context, women took a more visible role in public life (ibid.: 32). Pre-war, the NU agenda for women stressed that their place was at home, for example stating that women should

pray in their homes (ibid.: 51). In this regard they were less 'progressive' than Aisyiyah. The war led to a realization of the greater role of women in public life. The revolutionary context provided the catalyst for change. In 1950, NU established a second women's organization, Fatayat NU, to represent younger women.

A contemporary leader, Aisjah Dachlan (1955: 45, cited in Machrusah 2005: 32), commented that in the increasingly combative context of fighting to uphold the new republic, in which women were taking an active role, women of NU felt it was time for them to become organized, and 'face women's matters by themselves'. The organization feared that women would join in other organizations if this was not allowed. However, NU Muslimat's first regulations were written by men, stating that women's primary duties were to become *ibu sejati* (the true mother), which emphasized women's duties, not their rights (Machrusah 2005: 34). The regulations were soon revised to refer also to rights. NU Muslimat leader Hadijah Dachlan stated: 'The household is a kingdom managed by the woman' (ibid.: 35).

Muslimat became an independent organization in 1952 (renamed Muslimat NU [MNU]) at the same time the NU became a political party. MNU shared many of the concerns of the wider women's movement in arguing for the regulation of male prerogative in the family and supported an expanded role for women in public life. Its 1954 congress argued for a prohibition on child marriage, resolved to establish marriage advice bureaus (BP4) and supported the appointment of women to religious courts (Machrusah 2005: 47), and this led to the appointment of seven Muslimat women judges (ibid.: 52). MNU also requested that NU include women in party lists for regional and national parliamentary elections. NU released a *fatwa* supporting women's candidature in the 1955 elections (ibid.: 47), which were the first free elections held in the new republic. Five Muslimat women were selected as NU candidates and were elected to the DPR (out of 16 female parliamentarians comprising the largest group of women in any party and six were elected to the Constitutional Assembly [Konstituante]). A further NU *fatwa* in 1957 related to permissible conduct for women members of parliament. The *fatwa* acknowledged that in principle it was acceptable for women to sit in parliament as they were making laws not delivering verdicts (although they had previously accepted women in Islamic courts). In terms of behaviour in public life, women were required to act with dignity, cover their *aurat*, and have permission from authoritative persons (ibid.: 52).

MNU joined KWI in 1956, but the question of polygamy continued to divide them from secular women's organizations. The NU women members argued against the draft marriage law in 1957, joining forces with Sunaryo Mangunpuspito from Muslimat Masjumi.[14]

Like Aisyiyah, Muslimat has established a network of women's organizations (Majlis Taklim) that meet regularly to recite passages from the Qur'an and discuss theology, including the duties of a wife. Like Aisyiyah, Muslimat has used its wide network of local organizations to establish health and education

services and promote women's income generation, for example through microfinance. Fatayat NU has also established its network of branches and has been particularly active on issues of women's health.

### *Gerwani*

Gerwani (Gerakan Wanita Indonesia, or Indonesian Women's Movement), the women's mass movement associated with the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI), provided the monstrous image of activist women for the New Order. Its precursor, Gerwis (Gerakan Wanita Sedar—Movement of Aware Women) was formed on 4 June 1950 by activist groups including former IS members and women who had fought in the guerilla struggle. Its 500 initial members were mostly middle class, politically conscious women who took up IS anti-polygamy stance and fought for marriage law reform. Gerwis/Gerwani also championed wage workers and peasants, establishing crèches for children of women labourers, literacy courses and income-generating activities. In 1954, under pressure from the PKI, Gerwis was renamed Gerwani in an effort to appeal to a mass base. Indeed it was among the largest of the mass organizations affiliated with the PKI, and the largest women's organization in the post-Independence period. By the early 1960s, many of its leaders were PKI members. At that time, the PKI claimed it had 3 million members and a further 20 million people in affiliated organizations (Cribb 1990: 41). The communist daily, *Harian Rakyat*, reported 4 million Gerwani members on 20 August 1965 (Fallick 1983).

The standard accounts of Indonesian politics of the time (mostly written by male scholars) have barely mentioned Gerwani, and represented it as merely an appendage of the male-dominated PKI;[15]. However, Fallick (1983: 2) argues Gerwani had considerable organizational and ideological independence; its PKI-dominated leadership was at times in conflict with the PKI. While they supported the activities of Gerwani in mobilizing women, the PKI leaders' speeches often referred to women's 'backwardness'. The PKI invoked 'the new Indonesian man' and Gerwani 'introduced its own accents' in the concept of the 'new Indonesian woman': she was 'modern' in dress, cultural outlook and political vision. Gerwani's modernity was not modelled on the capitalist West, but on the examples of the socialist world (Wieringa 2002: 44–5). It actively supported the radical programmes of the Sukarno regime, pursuing the goal of a 'democratic socialist state in which women's rights would be guaranteed' (Wieringa 1993: 17). This led them to take positions that differed from those of other women's groups: for example, linking child marriage and prostitution to poverty and capitalist exploitation in the countryside, not simply an expression of men's power over women.

As befitting a socialist organization of the time, Gerwani was internationalist in its outlook. It affiliated with the Women's International Democratic Federation (WIDF) and felt affinity with the women's wing of the Dutch Communist Party and the Chinese Women's Federation (Wieringa 2002: 39–40). The German communist Clara Zetkin was a significant role model. Zetkin supported

the strategy of women's organizations being formed outside the party and formally separate from it (Waters 1989). Gerwani celebrated International Women's Day (which for them signified international solidarity, peace, marriage rights, rights of peasants and labourers) as well as the Indonesian National Day, Kartini Day (for women's emancipation and marriage rights) and Mothers' Day (signifying marriage law, equal rights, education) (Wieringa 2002: 265).

Gerwani's mass base was mainly among peasant women, on the basis of its social work in the villages and towns: literacy courses, *arisan* (rotating credit associations), handcrafts, kindergartens, marriage guidance and cooperatives (Hindley 1964). Organizing rural women culminated in the 1961 National Peasant Women's Seminar, which analysed their situation in terms of class, gender and citizenship and discussed how to involve peasant women in the political arena and in economic development (Wieringa 1993: 18).

A speech by Kartinah Kurdi at the seminar exemplifies their position. Peasant women faced 'multiple issues': they were often victims of forced marriage, child marriage, rape and arbitrary divorce. Because of poverty they could not afford proper health care and many died in childbirth or miscarried. Women agricultural labourers were not entitled to sick leave or maternity leave, and received discriminatory wages. As citizens, discriminatory laws prevented them being elected village heads or sitting on village councils. Like all peasants, they faced the problems of lack of land ownership and the ability to improve their standard of living (*Harian Rakyat* 15 December 1969, cited in Fallick 1983: 16; Wieringa 2002: 197). The 1961 seminar addressed the failure of the government to implement a legislated land reform (see Wieringa 1993: 18). Gerwani participated in the *aksi sepihak* (unilateral action—a 'land to the tiller' land reform) carried out by the communist-affiliated peasant organization BTI (Barisan Tani Indonesia) in the mid-1960s. About half the peasants imprisoned for participation in these actions were women (Wieringa 2002: 204).

In their major campaign of the 1950s, Gerwani initially supported other women's groups' Campaign for a democratic marriage law and argued for easing the costs of reconciliation and making divorce more costly. This stance (as well as their links to the PKI) put them in opposition to Islamic groups. They opposed child marriage and also pressed for heavy penalties for rape and abduction (Hindley 1964: 205). Gerwani cadres working in rural areas 'met with hundreds of cases of disregard for women's rights in marriage, such as wanton desertion, concubinage and inheritance conflicts'. They were also concerned about child marriage (Wieringa 2002: 238). Members reported that marriage abuses were a significant incentive for women to join.

Opposition to polygamy brought Gerwani into conflict with the male PKI leadership, many of whom were polygamous, and they assisted some wives of cadres to divorce polygamous husbands, although it is notable that Aidit, the charismatic and influential party secretary, had publicly supported the women's movement and their demands for marriage reform in 1953. Fears that emancipation would mean that men would be told to 'go to the kitchen' and that gender roles would be eroded were countered by a Gerwani leader writing in *Harian*

*Rakyat*, with reassurances that such anxieties were 'really stupid [for this] had nothing to do with emancipation' but occurred only when 'there was no domestic worker' and women were too heavily burdened to do everything alone. In such cases the 'cooperation between husbands and wives' might mean a husband helping his wife but 'women will always be women. Their two functions cannot be separated. Women as mothers and women as fighters in the spirit of Kartini are one . . .' (Sulami, writing in *Harian Rakyat* 19 June 1957, cited in Wieringa 2002: 261–2).

Like the other women's organizations, Gerwani never questioned women's identification with the family or their duties as mothers. Their popular magazine *Api Kartini* (*Kartini's Fire*) was aimed at a middle-class audience and published the same kinds of advice on housewifery and childcare as publications of less militant organizations. They went further than other women's organizations in valorizing women's housework as an important contribution to the economy; however, their position reflected the reality of women's economic importance in households. Women's responsibility for carrying household burdens was linked to poor economic conditions and 'feudal [*feodal*] remnants' (Wieringa 2002: 258). Housewives had a special social role, as managers of the household budget. The 1957 Gerwani congress called for price controls on everyday commodities (Hindley 1964: 207).

Prefiguring the focus of women's political action in 1997 (another period of economic crisis), Gerwani led demonstrations of women against rising prices, especially in the 1960s as Indonesia experienced hyper-inflation under Sukarno's economic policies (Fallick 1983: 17). While endorsing a model of femininity that valorized women's primary domestic role, they very much supported the notion that, through education and economic activities, women should be able to stand alone and not be totally dependent on their husbands. The National Housewives Seminar in 1964 was aimed at improving the involvement of women in public life:

> If many women now work outside the home, this does not mean that these women only seek additional income to meet the needs of everyday life. Most importantly it shows a growing awareness of a woman's responsibility as a citizen of a free country, which she envisages as becoming just and prosperous (*Api Kartini* November–December 1964: 23, cited in Fallick 1983: 14).

Gerwani endorsed an expanded notion of women's citizenship, arguing that women should be freed from household burdens in order to increase their involvement in public life. Along with other women's groups, they campaigned to increase women's participation in politics, including the repeal of the colonial ordinance forbidding women to be village heads (Wieringa 2002: 193).

Gerwani militancy was evident in its support for the political campaigns of the PKI among the peasantry, and for women waged workers, for example campaigning for the implementation of the clauses in the 1951 labour law pertaining

to the special rights of maternity and menstruation leave and breastfeeding breaks for women workers. SOBSI (Central All-Indonesian Workers Association), the communist-affiliated trade union, had its own women's bureau, whose membership overlapped with that of Gerwani. They carried out joint actions, but Gerwani's support for specific female rights, such as demands that the women's protection provisions of the 1951 labour laws be implemented, put them in conflict with PKI leadership—for example an article in *Harian Rakyat* 6 August 1964, stated: 'We don't need a feminist struggle. That time has passed. It's not the other sex that causes the inequalities in society' (cited in Fallick 1983: 20).

The priorities of the organization shifted as Indonesian politics transformed from the optimistic radicalism of the early post independence period, to the divisive tensions of the late 1950s and the abandonment of parliamentary democracy in the move to Guided Democracy in 1957. The Gerwani leadership embraced the political agendas of Sukarno and the male PKI leadership, stressing the singular importance of the struggle against imperialism. This led to a decline in the emphasis on the issues of women's special responsibility to provide for their families. Gerwani members volunteered for the West Irian and Crush Malaysia campaigns, with the leadership organizing training centres where, in the spirit of Srikandi, women were 'given political education . . . training in first aid and how to use machine guns and pistols' (Fallick 1983: 22). Even Hari Kartini and Hari Ibu were marked by rhetoric in support of Sukarno's political philosophy of Guided Democracy (Wieringa 2002: 160). Feminist women like S. K. Trimurti left the organization as specifically women's issues were sidelined.

## Gender politics and the politics of the republic

Women were not rewarded with an equal place in the new republic, and were shunted back into a primarily domestic role. They did not figure strongly as political leaders and women's issues fell into the background. However, Maria Ulfah Santoso was appointed Minister of Social Affairs in 1946–7, and S. K. Trimurti as Minister for Labour in 1947–8. Trimurti, who had been a leading figure in the Partai Buruh (Worker's Party) as well as in Gerwis brought in the first labour law of the new republic (Law No. 12 1948/1951). For women workers, this incorporated special protection provisions derived from laws enacted in the colonial NEI (Staatsblad 1925 No. 647 and Staatsblad 1941 No. 45), in particular a ban on night work between 6 p.m. and 6 a.m., and limitations on work deemed to present moral danger.[16] Law No. 12 added prohibitions on women working in mining. In a progressive move, women were entitled to two days of menstruation leave per cycle, paid maternity leave, and the right to breastfeeding breaks. This law has continued to have effect until a revised law in 2003, which contains a diluted version of its provisions. Protection legislation for women workers had been an issue for international feminist action in the 1920s, coinciding with the period in which young Indonesian nationalists were articulating their anti-colonial struggle. S. K. Trimurti was an admirer of the

German socialist Clara Zetkin who was a leading intellectual figure in the protection debates (Kessler-Harris *et al.* 1995: 14). Sukarno invoked her writing in his speeches and she was an important figure for women in Gerwani, in which Trimurti was a leading figure. Trimurti's role in addressing women worker's rights supports the contemporary political contention of the importance of gaining women members in formal political bodies (see Chapter 6).[17] In 1958, the infant Indonesian republic ratified International Labour Organization Convention 100 on equal pay for equal work (Law No. 10 1958) in a further embrace of the international labour agenda. Law No. 80 1957 established a principle of equal pay for equal work (Lahiri-Dutt and Robinson 2008).

The first democratic elections were held in the republic in 1955. The federated women's organizations were concerned to ensure that women used the rights gained in the new republic (Martyn 2005: 105). Perhaps a voter education campaign had some effect on the large number of women who exercised their right to vote (Siregar 2007: 49), and the mass Islamic organization, Nahdlatul Ulama, issued a *fatwa* allowing women to stand as candidates in the 1955 general elections (Machrusah 2005: 47). Large numbers of women voted, but few had party support as candidates, and even fewer won seats. A women's party did not win any seats.

Nationalist discourses commonly incorporate visions for women, of literacy, reform of marriage laws and so forth, 'yet such themes might serve more to mark out the task of national reconstruction and rewrite concepts of patriotic femininity than to address the material realities for women in different social groups' (Hall *et al.* 1993: 161). The national imagining of the male leaders of Indonesia's national revolution emphasized a post-*feodal* role for women as part of their imagining of a modern nation, but it apparently did not go beyond the symbolic domain to a commitment to political equality. Male hegemony in the domestic sphere represented a patriarchal dividend to men in general from the powerful men who controlled the state.

Sukarno, the founding president, embraced a view that separate women's projects were divisive and that the achievement of a socialist society would be the path for the emancipation of women. In particular, he adopted the Soviet view that the solution to working women's double burden lay in the socialization of domestic work. His 1951 book, *Sarinah: Kewajiban Wanita dalam Perjuangan Republik Indonesia* (*Sarinah: The Responsibilities of Women in the National Revolution*), was taken up by Gerwani cadre courses:

> Sukarno urged Indonesian women to become the 'second wheel' of the chariot that would bring independence. But as happened in many other processes of decolonization . . . after national independence was won the male leaders of the young independent state tried to curb women's activities and control the feminine. President Sukarno shifted gear; he no longer supported 'bourgeois' feminism, he denounced the independent nationalist women's organization Perwari[18] when it dared to attack his polygynous marriage in 1954 [see below], and he supported the 'true revolutionary spirit' of Gerwani (Wieringa 2002: 47).

Representations of women in Indonesian literature of the period are a further window into the shift in perceptions of women's role in the nation. The national struggle, during the Japanese occupation and beyond, represents fighting and physical struggle as male domains of activity, and women are in the background as 'dependents and as victims', or as 'besotted girlfriends of *pemuda* fighters' rather than (as we know from the historical record) as significant actors in the war. Post-war literature emphasized the association of women with nurturance, domesticity and 'traditional' values (Hatley 1997: 96–7).

## Post-independence struggle for marriage reform[19]

The new republican government issued Law No. 22 of 1946 concerning registration of marriages, reconciliation and divorce. Marriage, repudiation and reconciliation (*nikah*, *talak* and *rujuk*, respectively) were brought under the formal supervision of registrars (appointed by the Ministry of Religion and paid as civil servants), addressing the issue of the officiants' interest in divorce raised by Soewondo (Vreede-de Stuers 1960). People who failed to register marriages or divorces were fined. The procedures did address some of the women's concerns. Ministerial Instruction No. 4 1947 directed registrars not to record child marriages, and to ensure compliance with conditions laid down by the *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence) in the case of forced marriages. In cases of polygamy, registrars should ensure that the man knew of his obligations under *fiqh*; in cases of repudiation (*talak*), they should summon both parties, and try to persuade the husband not to pronounce the *talak*, or persuade him to retract it at the end of the *iddah* period (the one hundred day waiting period before a widow or divorced woman may remarry) (Vreede-de Stuers 1960: 124–5, 1976: 85). The new arrangements located responsibility for marriage, 'the one area of Islamic law that Muslims would not surrender without a fight', in the Ministry of Religious Affairs, which was controlled by Islamic interests (Lev 1972).

The 1949 Women's Congress continued to press for new marriage regulations, but still could not agree on the need for a unified law. The new parliament set up the Panitya Penjelidik Peraturan Hukum Perkawinan, Talak dan Rudjuk (The Investigative Committee on the Regulation of the Law on Marriage, Repudiation and Divorce—henceforth NTR Commission), which was charged with drawing up a bill 'in keeping with the spirit of modern times' (Vreede-de Stuers 1976: 85–6). It included a number of prominent women among its members: Nani Soewondo (secretary), Maria Ulfah Santoso, Suyatin Kartowiyono (Kowani/Perwari) plus Catholic and Muslim women representatives. Its deliberations were brought to the 1950 Women's Congress, and following this consultation, the commission took the bold step of preparing a general Act valid for all Indonesians, but incorporating regulations applying to specific religious groups. Draft clauses included: the necessity of consent of both parties; a minimum age of 15 for a woman and 18 for a man; and equal rights for both husband and wife in the event of divorce. For those whose religion permitted polygamy, the second marriage could not be registered without the explicit consent of the first wife

and the guarantee of support by the husband. A prospective polygamist should demonstrate his capacity to support more than one family (Vreede-de Stuers 1976).

The draft Act was still divisive: orthodox Muslim organizations found it 'too indefinite', and Catholic organizations 'could not support a law that allowed for polygamy and divorce' (Vreede de-Stuers 1960: 126). The non-party-affiliated federated women's organization Perwari organized a demonstration for several women's groups in 1953 to urge the government to enact the proposed law (Soewondo 1977: 284). In the face of the difficulty in reaching consensus, the government endorsed the 1946 law concerning registration of marriages, reconciliation and divorce (discussed above) as a temporary statue for the whole nation (Act No. 7 of 1954). Women parliamentarians opposed this move as a bloc, demanding the parliament consider draft legislation from the NTR Commission (ibid.). The government was cautious in its approach to marriage law reform because of the potential to alienate the Islamic parties.

While the quest for a new marriage law was stalled, other government decisions raised women's ire, particularly PP (Government Regulation) No. 19 of 1952, which extended pension rights to civil service widows in polygamous marriages. This was a de facto sanctioning of polygamy. Moreover, the contributions of all civil servants were raised to meet the costs—in the women's view making all of society bear the cost of polygamy. Perwari led the opposition, holding a street protest on 17 December 1953, which was joined by 19 organizations (including Gerwani), but no Muslim groups (see Soewondo 1981: 82–3; Indar Parawansa 2002). Islamic women's groups such as Masjumi Muslimaat and MNU formally supported PP19. However, Mrs Siregar (First Secretary of Perwari) commented: 'Even women of the Muslimat walked with us, albeit as individuals' (Wieringa 2002: 115–16).

The issue of marriage law reform continued to separate Muslim women's groups from others in the 1950s, in particular, the issue of polygamy created tensions between women's organizations, and between the women's groups and the political parties. As the Gerwani position became even more radical in its demands for reform, they moved further from Muslim groups, reflecting the growing tension between Islamic organizations and the communists through the 1950s. For example in 1957, Gerwani issued a statement demanding 'the immediate enactment of a democratic marriage law, valid throughout Indonesia, which will protect the rights of women. The law should prohibit forced marriage, child marriage, rape, arbitrary divorce' (*Harian Rakjat* 23 October 1957, cited in Fallick 1983: 12).

Political tensions erupted when Sukarno contracted a polygamous marriage to Hartini in 1954. His wife, Fatmawati (mother of Megawati Sukarnoputri), left the palace in protest. Perwari supported Fatmawati and sent a lawyer to assist her to obtain a divorce; but no religious official was brave enough to divorce her against the wishes of the president. Suyatin Karowiyono (of Perwari) likened Sukarno's polygamy to the degrading practice of concubinage in Javanese courts: 'Would this kind of feudalism [*feodalism*] be brought to life again? In an

independent Indonesia?' (Kartowiyono 1981, cited in Wieringa 2002: 116). His polygamy was popularly regarded as an expression of the spiritually powerful masculinity associated with Javanese sultans, where multiple wives symbolized the male ruler's potency.

The women's movement was divided on the marriage. Perwari opposed polygamous marriages on feminist grounds, Muslim groups supported them for religious reasons, and (contrary to their stance on the issue), Gerwani supported Sukarno's polygamy for political reasons:

> The [Perwari-led] action was seen as attacking the good name of the president and weakening his position while he was engaged in strongly resisting the imperialist pressure of the US; his defilement would mean an opportunity for the US [United States] to enter Indonesia (Sulami from Gerwani, cited in Wieringa 2002: 158).

The women's front in parliament held out for discussion of the NTR Commission draft law. PNI (Nationalist Party) politician Mrs Sumari strategically presented a more radical law to parliament, stipulating monogamy as the norm and giving men and women equal rights in divorce. This succeeded in having both bills debated in 1959 (Soewondo 1981) but no resolution was reached in the parliament. Indeed, no further change was achieved until the radical shift of government after the alleged communist coup in 1965. Nani Soewondo (1977) commented that between 1950 and 1960 the recurrent theme of the women's movement became 'What has happened to the matrimonial legislation?'

During the period of Guided Democracy (1957–64), Sukarno suspended the elected parliament and tried to balance conservative and radical forces in a radical nationalist agenda through appointed consensus-seeking institutions. He initiated the swing to authoritarian government by reinstating the 1946 Constitution that increased executive power relative to the legislature. Sukarno tried to win back the women's support and in an address to the fifth congress of Indonesian women in 1961, he told them that they were no longer a 'ladies movement' (that is, not just elite women) and should participate in the struggle for the liberation of West Irian. Gerwani leadership supported his adventurist campaigns for West Irian and against the formation of Malaysia, and became less attentive to women's issues (Fallick 1983: 21; Wieringa 2002). MNU women also held military training camps to support these nationalist campaigns (Douglas 1980: 166).[20]

Apparently Gerwani's capitulation to the PKI/Sukarnoist line was not complete. In return for their support, Gerwani wanted more female ministers in Sukarno's Guided Democracy cabinet and a democratic marriage law but 'in both issues they were disappointed' (Wieringa 2002: 213). The final years of the Sukarno regime were characterized by hyper-inflation which put real pressure on the ability of households to meet basic needs. In February 1962, the Gerwani leader, Salawati Daud, a member of parliament, issued a statement urging the

president to put an end to 'the misery of the price increases'. Gerwani's anti-price-rise demonstrations were militant at times and the government warned Gerwani leaders that these actions must stop (Wieringa 2002: 218). By the early 1960s the PKI women prevailed over feminist leaders in Gerwani.

Local branches of Gerwani worked closely with other women's organizations, like Christian and nationalist groups, especially on local issues, such as 'flood relief and help to victims of forced prostitution'; many women had dual memberships. However, such cooperation could not survive the political tensions of the period (Wieringa 1993: 20). Embracing the ultra-nationalist and socialist rhetoric of the period, Gerwani leadership continued the demonstrations on prices and criticism of government economic policy, and by 1961 Gerwani's New Year statement focused on prices and peace, and failed to mention marriage (Wieringa 2002: 161). KWI also turned to the left in the climate of Guided Democracy, supporting the Sukarnoist line, and Islamic organizations like Muslimaat Masyumi were expelled. After 1961, MNU was the only Muslim organization still an active member in KWI (Wieringa 2002: 53). Guided Democracy fractured the women's movement, destroying the unity which it had been working towards (Martyn 2005).

Guided Democracy came to an end in the alleged coup of 30 September 1965. On 29 October 1965, Kowani expelled Gerwani because of their alleged crimes during the coup and it was soon banned, along with all communist-affiliated organizations.

The coup was the culmination of growing political tensions, especially between the PKI, the army and political Islam. During the coup, six generals were abducted by left-wing troops and taken to an area near Halim air base where members of PKI-linked mass organizations were being trained as a civilian militia. Stories were circulated by the armed forces' newspaper that members of Gerwani, the women's organization associated with the PKI, had assembled there, dancing obscenely around the bodies of the generals and mutilating their bodies, including cutting off their genitals. Autopsy reports on the generals show no evidence that this mutilation occurred (Anderson and McVey 1971). These events have been memorialized at the site, and murals depicting these fantasized scenes give them an air of factuality. They were demonized as unnatural women and witches providing a founding myth for the New Order.

Mass killings, in which the majority of victims were members of the communist party and its affiliated mass organizations, followed the coup, justified as a popular response to alleged communist crimes, including the mutilation-murder of the generals on the night of the coup (Cribb 1990). An Indonesian student born in the 1980s commented to me recently 'We only ever heard at school about the seven generals: we never heard about all the other people murdered'.

The evil supposedly evidenced by the Gerwani women justified the extermination of communists and the authoritarian power which the New Order exercised in the name of stability and order. Suharto was quoted as saying the 'sadistic practices perpetuated by members of the Gerwani . . . had destroyed

the identity of Indonesian women . . . [who] . . . only know tender feelings that correspond to harmony in life' (Drakeley 2000: 11). The binary opposition of the cruel and lascivious politicized women and the countervailing New Order emphasis on the primary role of woman as wife and mother legitimated the suppression of the autonomous women's groups that had been developing for over a century. The dangerous character of women's political activism was at the heart of a central legitimating myth of the New Order that justified centralized power and a general militarization of society.

Gerwani leader, Umi Sarjono, questions:

> What did we do wrong? . . . The cultural struggle and the fight for equal rights in marriage was too heavy. . . . Probably our struggle against polygyny was too severe. If one of our members consented to become [a] second wife . . . she was thrown out of Gerwani. Maybe we went too fast? (Wieringa 2002: 181).

The widely circulated propaganda at the time (which originated in army newspapers) that the generals were castrated, seems to graphically symbolize the perceived threat to 'male privilege and male control over female sexuality' (Drakeley 2000: 10).

## Conclusion

The modern concept of women as a category and a commitment by elite activist women to the principles of gender equity coloured the politics of the nationalist period. In spite of differences between women's groups, they organized around a common identity on significant issues. Women in the nationalist movement succeeded in having a principle of equality for all citizens inserted in the founding constitution. Gender politics has been a feature of the struggle for nation from the early twentieth century. For women, nationalism has made possible forms of activism which were previously impossible, and simultaneously limited their horizons (Hall *et al*. 1993: 100). While most accounts of the nationalist revolution and the politics of the republic have not given women a significant voice, feminist scholarship has provided a critical stance from which to evaluate how historical narratives reflect gendered power relations, and the Reform period has allowed a recovery of histories that were obliterated by New Order histories, which served state ideology. This has involved reassessment of figures like Kartini, and a recovery of the positive contributions of Gerwani.

From the early twentieth century, struggles for women's education were regarded as central to women's empowerment: education would underpin women's capacity as managers of modern households and educators of children, as well as rational citizens in a modern state. Female literacy and women's education are common in discourses of national progress, 'yet such themes might serve more to mark out the task of national reconstruction and rewrite concepts of

patriotic femininity than to address the material realities of women in different social groups' (Hall *et al.* 1993: 161). But Indonesian women, initially organizing around the vision articulated in Kartini's letter, had made significant achievements: education was an arena where women acted independently as seen by the establishment of schools for girls. Achievements were not only in modern secular education; women in Islamic organizations have also been successful in establishing education for women and girls.

Women's groups were less successful in gaining support from the mainstream nationalist movement and governments in the early republic for state intervention in the private sphere of the family. The quest for a secular marriage law expresses a central issue in feminist politics: how to bring matters deemed private inside the realm of state decision-making. The private sphere has an ambiguous status in relation to the public/civil realm. The political task facing women is to challenge this covert anti-egalitarianism and rupture the barrier which excludes matters of 'the private' from becoming the subject of public reflection and discussion.

Initially, the Indonesian republic was constituted as a parliamentary democracy. A number of feminist political theorists have argued that democracies based on elected representative institutions have tended to valorize the public at the expense of the private and this is the reason that formal political institutions in a democracy have not represented women or their interests.

The struggle for marriage reform in Indonesia particularly foundered on the divisive issue of polygamy. Politicians saw marriage law reform as a potential wedge between Islamic and secular nationalists, but also, the women's attack on polygamy challenged 'the patriarchal dividend' flowing from male control of public institutions. The contestation over marriage law exemplifies the manner in which the state is an agent in sexual politics acting quintessentially in a public realm culturally marked as masculine (Franzway *et al*. 1989).

The agenda of the Indonesian women's movement cannot be read as an analogue of the Western feminist movement, even though it was influenced by European liberal ideas at its inception. In domesticating European ideals of equality, Indonesian women built on the empowering aspects of indigenous models of femininity: the acknowledged important role of women in household economies (the relations sometimes glossed as 'the matrifocal family') and cultural traditions that did not prevent women from assuming public office. The elite women who were the vanguard faced more restrictive definitions of femininity than their lower-class sisters, who in turn struggled under the exploitative economic conditions of customary and colonial power relations. A strong strand in the Indonesian movement has been the rejection of models of masculine authority in family relations, which left women economically vulnerable—one of the principal objections to polygamy. Islam has been an important factor in this ideology of male privilege, and in contemporary feminist politics, women have been inspired by challenges to Islamic forms of masculinity arising in critiques by Muslim women in the Middle East (see Chapter 7).

In its retreat from the democratic agenda of the 1950s, and its further centralization of authoritarian power, the New Order institutionalized women's difference. Carol Pateman (1992: 18–19) has explored the competing political claims of feminists couched in terms of 'equality' and 'difference':

> The fact that only women have the capacity to become pregnant, give birth and suckle infants is the mark of 'difference' par excellence. Childbirth and motherhood have symbolised the natural capacities that set women apart from politics and citizenship; motherhood and citizenship, in this perspective, like difference and equality, are mutually exclusive. But if motherhood represents all that excluded women from citizenship, motherhood has also been constructed as a political status. Motherhood, as feminists have understood for a very long time, exists as a central mechanism through which women have been incorporated into the modern political order.

A critical feature of modern society (which Pateman terms 'modern/fraternal patriarchy') is that women are included in the political order in a manner different from men. As the subordinates of men, in 'their own private sphere', they are excluded from civil society in the sense of the public sphere of the economy and citizenship. It is motherhood that forms the basis of women's political status, and their incorporation into the political order; motherhood shapes their duty to the state and their citizenship (Pateman 1992: 22–3):

> The engendering of nation and nationalisms provides many clues as to why women's active involvement in nationalist struggles does not result in their holding effective power after independence. Familial language, ordering gender relations, is . . . frequently at the heart of the 'imagined community' . . . . Women are seen as mothers of the nation, an image which places their reproductive capacities at the center of their service to the nation (Hall *et al.* 1993: 100).

The identity politics pursued by the contemporary Indonesian women's movement, focusing on issues such as violence and family livelihoods (see Chapter 6) can be seen as a continuation of the political struggle to bring those arenas of life deemed private, and hence excluded from public reflection and electoral politics, into the public domain of political contestation.

Suharto's New Order incorporated at its heart a project of homogenizing gender relations and forms of gender difference across the archipelago, which went hand-in-hand with a strategy of homogenizing the family forms that arise on the basis of gender difference. In a somewhat paradoxical manner, the New Order took up the quest for state regulation of marriage, against the opposition of Islamic clerics (see Chapter 3). New Order policies had the effect of depoliticizing women's organizations which were incorporated as instruments (*alat*) of the extension of state power. However, this homogenizing imperative of the New Order was not successful in completely eradicating the spirit of the earlier

women's movement and its contribution to the imaging of the form of the new nation.

The intersecting issue of Islam has always complicated the relation between the Indonesian women's movement and the state. Islam has always provided a potential counter-ideology for the form of the Indonesian nation, and the Islamic state has been periodically championed by political Islam. The women's movement had difficulty finding unity on the important issues relating to marriage reform, because by and large the constituent organizations sought to achieve a (delicate) unity between Muslims and others. In the current political era, with the demise of the New Order and the struggle to once again define the political nature of Indonesia, many of the struggles that characterized the nationalist movement are re-emerging. The claims of Islam (both radical and conservative) to define the moral tone of the nation and the demands of women for an equal place in the political order are part of this trend.

Central to the struggle for democracy is the dismantling of the ideological framework of the New Order, indoctrinated in the population (using the quaint term '*sosialisasi*') through a process of militaristic state command that gathered momentum in the 1970s and 1980s. The 'gender regime', built on the damning myth of the Gerwani 'whores', is a critical element of this framework—a key plank in the gender regime built on domesticated femininity and a militarized hegemonic masculinity that delivered a 'patriarchal dividend' to men within the private world of the family.

# 3 The Gender Order of the New Order

Suharto's New Order exercised gendered power through policies such as family planning and state control of women's organizations in a familial model that registered male authority. This gendered power operated discursively: officially sanctioned images of femininity in this period symbolized Indonesian women as subordinate to men within the family and the state, with their primary civic duties performed in their roles as wives and mothers. Repressive and restrictive representations of women and circumscribed female roles in public life underpinned the political system. Women's citizenship was maternal citizenship, and their difference from men was deemed to be located in their *kodrat* (biologically specific nature) assumed to be God given and sanctioned by Islam. It was a central pillar of the ideology of the New Order—the *azas kekeluargaan*, the family foundation of the state. The family trope symbolically anchored the militarized hegemonic masculinity and disguised its violent character through the image of the benevolent *bapak* (father). The associated exercise of authoritarian power supported the monopolization of political and economic control by a small elite of military men and rent-seeking cronies (Robison 1986).

This chapter investigates the realization of the family foundation in corporatist groups where women were organized as mothers in service of the nation. Governmentality was extended in the form of biopower through the coercive family planning programme. The authoritarian state checked the free-flowing debate and contestations over gender relations that had characterized the Indonesian women's movement.

The 'family foundation' concept originated in Javanese nationalism—put forward by Soetatamo Soriokoesoemo in the early twentieth century—based on the revitalization of Javanese culture. It is an inherently hierarchical idea of family, based on the parent–child relationship in the *kawala–gusti* (slave–master) model: a family state with the 'wise father, the caring mother, and their children who know their places, duties and responsibilities' (Shiraishi 1997: 84). The founder of the nationalist organization Taman Siswa (TS), Ki Hadjar Dewantara, took up a democratic version of the family principle; the TS schools were influenced by radical educationalists such as Steiner and Montessori. These schools would liberate people from the hierarchies of the colonial state and replace them with a simple family principle: teachers as mothers and fathers to their pupils/children.

This practice would integrate students from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. That organizations could be sustained by a family bond was promoted as a counter-principle to the regulatory nature of the colonial state. TS was an *organisatie* (Dutch: organization) but its members ideally worked together not just because of the rules, but because they felt a commonality of spirit and purpose. In Dewantara's words: '*organizatie* points to our body; and *keluarga* (Indonesian/Malay: family) shows our spiritual unity' (cited in Shiraishi 1997: 93). *Keluarga* could serve as an effective organizational principle for the nationalists to counter the hegemonic Dutch system (Shiraishi 1997: 94).

In the colonial period, the terms *bapak* (father) and *ibu* (mother) as respectful terms of address spread to schools and other state institutions, marking authority/hierarchical relations with a familial cast. As TS teachers and graduates joined the government, the concept of *kekeluargaan* or family-ism developed in TS, also migrated to government offices. Family-ism 'resides most comfortably in government and corporate offices and school classrooms where Indonesian is used' (Shiraishi 1997: 93). The family principle was enshrined in the 1945 Constitution, the foundation for the Republic of Indonesia (Wilopo 1970; Shiraishi 1997: 84–90). It was further elaborated by Sukarno in his concept of Guided Democracy (1957–65) (Shiraishi 1997: 91), when he abolished the elected parliament and instituted a turn to centralized executive-driven government in Indonesia. The ideology was taken up as a central pillar of the New Order, articulated in the greatest detail by the ruling party (Golkar, or 'functional groups') during the period of Suharto's rule (Reeve 1985). Representations of gender difference and their expression through gender relations in the family have been harnessed in the service of both radical (democratic) and authoritarian positions.

The authoritarian political style of the New Order and its elaboration of the family principle arose in the context of the disquiet with what were regarded as Western political ideas and political practice, the basis of the 1950 Constitution which gave form to the highly competitive parliamentary politics in the stormy first years of the new republic. Dissatisfied with the political instability and economic chaos that accompanied liberal democracy, political leaders began to quest for a 'Javanese' political doctrine. This was expressed as an innate need for:

> a more 'organic' political body in which the contribution of each individual to the body corporate was recognised, in which each could participate according to his station (McDonald 1980: 95).

The old idea of the 'family system', which put collective above individual good and also required 'democracy with leadership' (McDonald 1980: 95), was embraced. Leadership, understood implicitly as the 'natural authority' of the father, had already been given form in Sukarno's Guided Democracy that abolished the elected legislature and re-instituted the 1945 Constitution which

provided for strong executive authority. The lack of tolerance of dissent was justified in terms of the 'family principle' as fundamental to Indonesian-style 'democracy'. Thus, ideals of harmony and consensus (while not eschewing hierarchy) were promoted as autochthonous Indonesian political values. To counter the 'disruptive schism' of class differences, this style of governance divided civil society into 'functional groups' that represented common interests—labour, fishermen, youth, farmers, women and veterans (Reeve 1985)—which held seats in the national parliament. However, the enforced organic harmony in the parliament did not relieve the rising tension between the army on the one hand, and the Communist Party (PKI) which provided Sukarno with his mass base, on the other hand.

The political tensions of this period were resolved after the alleged coup in 1965–6 with (then) General Suharto capturing the state and institutionalizing the role of the army as the partner to the executive in administration. Suharto built on Sukarno's foundations of an authoritarian system of government. The trope of the patriarchal family naturalized the repressive forms of power that characterized the regime. The 'natural' authority of the male household head was mirrored in the structures of the state, where the president exercised his paternalistic authority as the father of the nation. President Suharto was known as Bapak Pembangunan (the 'father of development'); civil servants also used the familial form of address Bapak (father) to their (usually male) superiors (Brenner 1995; Sunindyo 1996; Suryakusuma 1996). This provided a generalized model for the political system: the president's natural authority was mirrored by mostly male officials in key positions in the state hierarchy, including parliament, where women held 8 per cent of seats in 1967, reducing to 6.2 per cent in 1968. There were few women in high positions in the civil service or judiciary. However, there has never been an outright ban on or strong public opposition to women in political or public office, and government publications from the decades of the New Order record some women in positions of authority, albeit a small minority.

Familist ideology contributed to the failure of the rule of law and the excesses of corruption that characterized Suharto's period in office. The New Order rested on the idea that conflict could be settled 'in a family way' rather than perpetrators of crime (such as corrupt officials) being brought to justice (Katjasungkana 2000b). The intimate trope of the family was an ideological counterpoint to the militarism of the New Order: the disciplining of civil society by what women's activist Ita Nadia refers to as the 'military command structure applied to society' (Nadia 2001). The hegemonic masculinity at the core of state power was associated with violence, a 'public secret' close to the bland surface provided by the regime's self-representation. Thus, state-sponsored violence, including gendered violence such as rape and murder of women in East Timor and Aceh (Wandita 2000), or the sexual violation and murder of the labour activist Marsinah (see Chapter 4), effectively utilized gendered tropes in disciplining society (Katjasungkana 2000a).

New Order gender ideology rendered the family as a cornerstone of the nation and valorized the wife as the *pendamping suami*—the companion at the husband's side (an idea that has been linked to the expression of gender ideology in elite Javanese circles, the wife as the *kanca wingking* or 'background companion'). For elite women, this role had to be maintained even at the expense of their role as mothers: their first duty was to be at their husband's side on official occasions, even if this meant 'abandoning' their children to another carer, a point made to me with a mix of frustration and irony by the wife of an Eselon 1 (the highest level) civil servant who had to leave her sick infants at home to attend an official function on the instruction of her husband's boss, the Minister's wife.

Perhaps not content with secure domination of the public world of politics, administration and the formal economy, male hegemony was formally extended into the family and household. Men were officially designated the heads of households in the 1974 Marriage Law, while women were the housekeepers, in a seeming parody of the important economic roles women have played in local economic practices that sustain households throughout the archipelago. This gesture by the state (discussed below) was ironic, given that it implemented some of the demands for state regulation of private matters that women had been demanding since the 1928 Women's Congress. With the segregation of production and housework, the 'stay-at-home housewife' is a trope of modernity associated with the rationalization of the economy that accompanied the growth of capitalism and the middle class (van Vucht Tijssen 1990), and was embraced by the New Order in its adoption of a market-driven model for national development. The wife/mother expressing her biologically given nurturing capacities to provide a 'haven in a heartless world' is commonly associated with the restructuring of gender relations in capitalist modernity (ibid.).

The concept of citizenship has been fragile for many Indonesians, who do not yet all share a 'national imaginary' as described by Anderson (1983). Political leaders in post-Independence Indonesia have been focused on forging a shared sense of nationhood and citizenship. At the level of state ideology, the radical nationalist flourishes of the founding president, Sukarno, gave way to the careful, pragmatic approach of the New Order. It set about the ideological indoctrination of the population into the state ideology, Pancasila or the Five Principles, another organic doctrine 'discovered' by Sukarno as the autochthonous political principles of the Indonesian people. Originally targeting civil servants throughout the 1980s, indoctrination in the state ideology was gradually extended throughout society. The national motto, 'Unity in Diversity', does not attempt to expunge difference, but the bureaucratic project of the New Order attempted to tame it—for example, through codification of essential elements of regional cultural differences, described in Indonesian as '*inventorisasi*' of culture. This 'inventorization' has been primarily directed at folkloric aspects of culture: performance of dance, ritual and theatre, material cultural forms such as house styles, and the establishment of a 'canon' of epic literature (Acciaioli

1985; Taylor 1994). In this vein, the government tried to impose a homogenizing vision of women on the wide diversity of women's social participation found among peoples of the archipelago. This defined women's citizenship as based on their difference from men, expressed through their dutiful performance of wifely and motherly roles.

The New Order appropriated the national days established for commemorating Indonesian women's contribution to the nation (Mother's Day commemorating the 1928 Indonesian Women's Congress, and Kartini Day) as vehicles for the propagation of a vision of gender relations at odds with that of the women who were ostensibly memorialized. While Kartini sought to expand her life possibilities beyond the strictures of Javanese court culture, and the Women's Congress sought women's rights in education and marriage, in New Order Indonesia these two national days marked women's difference, their distinctiveness as mothers and wives. Typical modes of celebration included healthy baby competitions, or quizzes that tested women's knowledge of how to be good mothers and wives. Government officials would give speeches urging them to honour the memory of national heroines such as Kartini by supporting government programmes for women—programmes that stressed the duties and skills of motherhood.

Not all Indonesian women endorsed this official construction of women's citizenship resting on their performance of wifely and motherly duties. The prospect of another such Mother's Day made the Indonesian feminist scholar Julia Suryakusuma feel:

> an allergy to witnessing all sorts of empty ceremonies, listening to speeches which are burdened with empty flattery of women as mothers. An allergy to seeing TV announcers dressed up in fancy *kain*/*kebaya* [national dress of wrapped batik skirt and long-sleeved blouse] as if by wearing [that costume] emancipation has been achieved. Allergic to seeing Mother's Day in America shown on TV as part of the commemoration of Hari Ibu (Suryakusuma 1994).[1]

These national days had an implicit message that the ideal of equal citizenship pursued by the nationalist women's movement had been set aside for an ideal for women based on difference—the difference of motherhood. The sanctification of Kartini on her eponymous day may reflect sympathy for her suffering as a mother, rather than celebrate her championing of women's freedoms.

The offering of citizenship to women on a different basis from men was crucial to the New Order strategy of dominance through a militaristic form of hegemonic masculinity that served the interests of the power elite. Women were compulsorily organized in a series of state-sponsored, hierarchical organizations which emphasized their own identification with the household and motherhood, and their connection to the state through their husbands. The state strategy exemplified the critical feature of modern fraternal patriarchy identified by

Pateman (1988) that women are included in the political order as the subordinates of men, in 'their own private sphere', excluded from the public sphere of the economy and citizenship. It is motherhood that forms the basis of women's political status, and their incorporation into the political order; motherhood shapes their duty to the state and their citizenship (Pateman 1992: 22–3). However, as will be argued in subsequent chapters, other New Order policies, especially those that returned economic benefits to the group who had captured the state, undercut this exclusion of women from the public sphere.

## Official women's organizations

In official familism, the normative vision of women's social roles and social participation was promoted through two official women's organizations. In its attempt to impose a repressive order on the nation, the New Order banned mass organizations in the villages. Independent women's organizations were disbanded (or banned, in the case of Gerwani) and brought under the umbrella of these corporatist nation-wide bodies (Sullivan 1983). Elite women, the wives of civil servants, were organized into chapters of Dharma Wanita (DW), taking a Sanskrit-derived term used to imply a preordained role for women, which carries the sense of the 'ladies auxiliary'. Village women's organizations were incorporated within the new state-organized Pembinaan Kesejahteraan Keluarga, or PKK, which is usually rendered in English as the Family Welfare Movement (Sullivan 1983, 1994). Membership of DW was compulsory for the wives of civil servants, organizing them to participate in official functions and to carry out charitable work in the service of national development. Within these organizations, women were enjoined as citizens to carry out their wifely and motherly duties. The 1983 Broad Guidelines on State Policy (GBHN), the powerful New Order legal instrument defining state policies, officially set out the definition of women's wifely citizenship and the functions of PKK in promoting national development.

This promotion of unitary women's organizations paralysed socio-religious women's organizations even though (unlike Gerwani) they were still legal. Machrusah quotes Asmah Sjachruni of MNU: '. . . for twelve years we were paralyzed and we could not hold any congress until 1979 . . . . [The official wives' organizations] took all Muslimat's leaders, especially at regional level. Teachers were not allowed to be members of Muslimat, wives of civil servants were not allowed to be members of Muslimat. . . . We could not join PKK. . . . We were not invited to [government] courses related to women's career development' (2005: 64). Before the 1971 election, the first election held by the regime, parties were forcibly 'simplified' and NU, Muslimat's parent organization, was fused into an Islamic party—PPP—one of two 'loyal opposition' parties allowed to contest elections under the New Order.[2] NU and Muslimat existed in a climate of intimidation, including government taking over some of the kindergartens and schools owned by Muslimat. For example, kindergartens in East Java were taken over by PKK, which claimed ownership (ibid.).

Within DW, wives were expected to subordinate their own interests to the furtherance of their husbands' civil service careers. Chapters were organized to mirror departments in the civil service, and so thoroughly was DW subordinated to masculine public power that leadership within the organization was determined not on the basis of candidates' talents or achievements, or democratically by voting, but by the hierarchy of public offices held by the members' husbands. When a man was inaugurated as governor of a province, or a new rector at a university, for example, his wife was simultaneously installed as head of DW in that province or university.

Women who were themselves civil servants were anomalous in terms of the ideology of gender difference underlying DW. The organization was based on an assumption that wives had free time for voluntary work and that women who themselves held public office had to find time to participate in the DW of their husbands' organizations. A high-ranking female civil servant who had been passed over for promotion in favour of a man who was, in her view, less qualified and less experienced, related to me that her superior had evinced as an excuse that if she had been promoted, it would have left his wife 'lonely' in DW. That is, her promotion would have left a gap in the DW, a lack of a female spouse of appropriate status at the higher levels of the organization. Such reasoning delivers the patriarchal dividend and engenders the public sphere as a male domain.[3]

While DW connected wives of civil servants (elite women) to an official women's movement, non-elite women were organized into chapters of the PKK. All women were required to join. This organization was constituted as a section of village government (women's affairs) and coordinated, not through the Ministry of Women's Affairs, but through the Department of Home Affairs, which was responsible for local government. PKK propagated the state ideology of natural patriarchal authority in the family, and women's subordinate status. As in DW, wifehood determined leadership. The wife of the Minister of Home Affairs automatically headed PKK at the national level. The same criterion operated at lower levels of government down to the village, where the local PKK chapter was entrusted to the wife of the village head.

Village-level PKK activities have had multiple functions. The PKK provided ideological indoctrination for women, disseminating official gender ideology among rural women. This emphasized their responsibilities as citizens, as custodians of the household and as the bearers of future generations of citizens. The normative definition of women's role is in contradiction with the reality of the lives of Indonesian women, whose daily activities are not limited to housewifery. In the case of non-elite women, their economic activity is critical for their families' survival, but home-based occupations such as trading have also long been important for the elite (Djajadiningrat-Nieuwenhuis 1987). There is evidence that before the 1997 monetary crisis, the two-income family was becoming the standard in the growing Indonesian middle class. This reflected not only the career aspirations of educated women, but also the level of income needed

to support the lifestyle that was becoming the norm for middle-class households (Manning 1996).

One of the most important functions of PKK was mobilizing women to participate in maternal and child health programmes, in particular encouraging them to pay regular visits to integrated health-service stations for mothers and children (*pos pelayanan terpadu*, or *posyandu*). These health-service stations weigh, vaccinate and chart infants' progress; pregnant women are examined and vaccinated; and mothers are instructed in infant nutrition and health. The use of non-medical village cadres to extend the reach of government health services has won many accolades, in particular from UNICEF, which saw this as a model to be emulated in other poor countries. Indonesia has had particularly high rates of infant mortality and morbidity, and maternal mortality and the *posyandu* have had some success in a rational technical sense in addressing these major health problems. The importance of these stations in instilling a 'modern' ideal of house-bound motherhood was brought home to me while visiting a *posyandu* in a poor neighbourhood of Makassar (then Ujungpandang) in South Sulawesi in 1990. The health-care providers were openly critical when children were brought by someone other than their birth mother. Too busy earning money or performing domestic chores to accompany her children herself, a mother would sometimes delegate the task to a sibling caretaker or other, usually female, relative.

The criticism indicated that it was not only the children's health that was under surveillance but also the women's parenting. The critics were themselves women, many of whom had children of their own at home with a caretaker on whose assistance they relied to work outside the home. Routinely in Indonesia, poor households attend to gender arrangements and allocate available labour for the sake of collective economic goals. This often involves entrusting the care of a child who is no longer breastfeeding to someone other than the birth mother, who is thereby freed to work in the rice-fields or elsewhere outside the home. Households may even recruit temporary members to enable this. The assumption of the *posyandu* staff in Makassar that women should privilege tasks directly associated with mothering over all other activities was a luxury that many poor women and their families could not afford. The programme of the New Order not only regarded the family as the site for the constitution of women's citizenship, but the idealized family form, in turn, was narrowly described and predicated on unequal and phantasmagoric gender relations.

The criticism of mothers that I heard in Makassar was symptomatic of the anomaly inherent in the idealized family form. PKK ideology and practice promoted a construction of the feminine that had more to do with the 'patriarchal bargain' associated with capitalist modernity and related elite urban lifestyles and romanticization of housewives as guardians of domesticity, than it did with the lives of poor Indonesian women trying to make ends meet within local economies centred on seasonal agriculture and petty trade. In one instance from the 1980s, women in rural Java whose families could not afford chairs or tables and who used woven floor mats instead, were advised by PKK leaders to move

the furniture around regularly 'so husbands wouldn't get bored' (Martin-Schiller 1984, pers. comm.). This comment resonated with the complaint expressed in a letter to the Jakarta daily *Kompas* at about the same time, where the writer described a PKK-sponsored activity in which poor village women were taught to make black forest cake using (imported) canned cherries and aerosol cream obtainable from city supermarkets.

Inside these state-sponsored organizations, women are called 'Ibu (literally mother) X', meaning 'wife of X' not 'mother of X'. This was a radical change from the teknonyms commonly used as forms of address in much of rural Indonesia (see Chapter 1). Teknonymy emphasizes parenthood as the basis of adult social identity and generational difference as fundamental to the organization of social relations and valorizes parenthood as synonymous with adulthood, rather than emphasizing gender differences organized around the notion of a household with a male head. To call an adult woman Ibu X in the sense of Mrs X emphasizes her relation to patriarchal authority in the family, whereas teknonyms are markers of generational relations that are fundamental to the everyday workings of the bilateral kinship systems of the archipelago. The women in the village of Soroako where I conducted fieldwork struggled with these forms of address in the 1970s and 1980s as they dutifully responded to the exhortations of company managers' wives to establish their own wives' associations. They would dissolve into laughter as they tried to remember who 'Ibu X' referred to, until they came up with a personal name or more usually a teknonym. The use of formal address in social organizations extends the bureaucratic use of relationships modelled on a putative patriarchal family into civil society. In public life, the patriarchal forms of address (women being known by their husbands' names) have replaced the gender-neutral terms of the radical nationalist period where the egalitarian *saudara* (brother/sister) was commonly used between adults. This mode of address has been replaced with a hierarchical one based on the assumption of a natural form of gendered authority in the family, which becomes the model for authority in society at large.

Since the fall of Suharto, there have been calls by women's groups to dismantle the state-sponsored organizations. Sinta Nuriyah, the wife of President Abdurrahman Wahid (1999–2000), as the national head of DW (renamed DW Persatuan or DW Association), stated that participation was now voluntary and the wife of the head of a government unit was no longer automatically the president who was now elected by the membership. Even under the rule of Suharto, DW was not being totally encompassed by governmentality. Some DW groups were active in the protests leading to the downfall of Suharto. In Yogyakarta, in particular, they provided logistic support to demonstrating students.

The doctrine of familism as the basis of state organization, the charters of the official women's movements and the encoding of wife/mother status in official language indicated a single national definition of the feminine that was intended to override differences in gender definitions, gender relations and appreciations of the feminine throughout the archipelago. The unitary definition

of women's citizenship as 'citizen mother' attempted to construct a universalizing identity. This goes hand in hand with a universalizing definition of the family form deemed appropriate to the modern Indonesian nation: the monogamous union in which the wife is the guardian of the domestic world of consumption, the prime actor in the reproduction of a new generation of Indonesian citizens, whereas the husband is oriented to the world outside the family, the world of production. This modern family is 'blessed' with a small number of well-spaced children and the government family planning programme helped them achieve this.

## Family planning[4]

That women's citizenship rests on their difference (*kodrat*) has been most obvious in the reframing of women's sexuality in terms of the rationalizing doctrine of family planning: the ideal woman is the mother who, with the aid of modern contraceptives, produces her two well-spaced, healthy and well-educated children, who grow up to take their places as productive workers and loyal Indonesian citizens. The state-sponsored family planning programme was a major social initiative of the New Order regime. Beginning in the 1970s, it has achieved high contraceptive prevalence rates among married women, and pioneered strategies such as community distribution of contraceptives that hitherto had only been available to affluent urban women through private clinics. The slowing down of Indonesia's population growth is seen by commentators as a major success of the regime. Suharto reversed the pro-natalist rhetoric of his predecessor, Sukarno, for whom Indonesia's large and increasing population was an asset, not a liability. While support for women's control of their fertility might seem in contradiction with the overall thrust of New Order policy for women, the programme was adopted at the instigation of foreign donors who also 'bankrolled' the programme (Blackburn 2004).[5] Control of population growth was necessary in order for Indonesia to undergo the 'demographic transition' as a necessary prerequisite to 'take-off' in the Rostowian rhetoric of Indonesian economic development.

In 1968, the first year of his first term as president, Suharto saw to the formation of the National Family Planning Institute. Two years later, he upgraded it to a coordinating body reporting directly to him. By 1976, contraceptive services were provided free of charge through the family planning programme (Keluarga Berencana, henceforth KB) by way of 2700 government clinics and 20,000 village centres, and child-bearing rates had begun to register a significant decline, especially in densely populated Bali and parts of Java. The World Bank data show a steep long-term reduction in the average annual increase in population size—from 2.4 per cent in 1970–5 to 1.8 per cent in 1980–95, down to a projected 1.3 per cent in 1995–2001 (World Bank 1996), involving a drop in the total fertility rate from an average of more than six children per mother in the 1960s to less than three per mother in the 1990s (Hull 1994). Most adult women will have come in contact with this programme. Until an initiative in the

1990s for large-scale privatization of family planning, contraceptives were only available to most Indonesians through the state-sponsored programme, which only serves the contraceptive needs of married women, and (notionally) only with the consent of their husbands.

The state was able to enlist support for KB from the major Islamic mass organizations, NU and Muhammadiyah. While NU had issued a *fatwa* in 1938 that implied a mild prohibition on medical contraception, by 1960, they had 'come to terms with' contraception, and were 'discussing it in terms of classical *fiqh*'; it was given the status of *makruh* which is reprehensible but permitted (Hooker 2003: 167). In 1969, NU issued a *fatwa* supporting KB in response to demands from MNU (Zuhri *et al.* 1979: 112). It was forbidden to use contraception to altogether prevent conception, however; the state propaganda of 'child spacing' accorded with this view. By the late 1960s, Muhammadiyah had also considered the issue and arrived at a position where it was acceptable to use contraception, with the consent of both spouses, if pregnancy threatened the health of the wife or because of poverty (ibid.). Non-reversible methods (such as tubal ligation) were forbidden, however, and this was made clear in a *fatwa* on population, health and family planning from the semi-official body, MUI (Majelis Ulama Islam, Council of Islamic Scholars) in 1983–4, which endorsed the approach of the government programme, for example, in linking contraception to happy and prosperous families. The *fatwa* also reinforced rejection of abortion on Islamic grounds.[6]

Motivating messages on radio, television and billboards linked spacing children and limiting family size to responsible female citizenship. Men were in the background in these campaigns. Villages in Java displayed the 'two finger' symbol of the programme (representing the slogan *dua anak cukup*—two children is enough) on walls and entry gates to villages. Long-term 'acceptors' were rewarded, and in the most exemplary cases, received their reward in person from the president, with photos of the presentations being used as posters. The programme has promoted an idealized femininity, represented in posters and television ads as the mother of the well-spaced, small family, who is calm and serene, and blessed with a curvaceous body, in contrast to her harassed and scrawny sister, with her tribe of tiny children clutching at her knees.

The rhetoric of the family planning programme locates fertility within families. Formally, the programme's clients—'targets' in the military-sounding term used by its officials—were 'couples of child-bearing age' *pasangan usia subur* (PUS). But in everyday usage by family planning workers, PUS is used to refer to married women. In addition, the methods being promoted by the campaign are overwhelmingly female methods (the pill, the intrauterine device [IUD], injectables and implants).

In 1991, married women were surveyed about the contraceptive techniques they used. In declining order of popularity, they were the pill, IUDs, injections, implants and tubectomies—all were female methods. In spite of the popularity of the pill, the programme has emphasized injections, implants and IUDs as the choice for new consumers, all of which are methods that give control to the service provider.

Sterilization (for men or women) is not officially programmed because of religious opposition noted above (Hooker 2003).[7]

While the pill is the most popular method with women, the IUD, Depo Provera (the long-acting injectable contraceptive) and increasingly, long-lasting hormonal implants, have been promoted as the methods of first choice for new 'acceptors'. The reason given by a family planning official was to 'upgrade the quality of our acceptors' and improve continuation rates (Robinson 1989). These methods take responsibility out of the consumer's hands. A 1989 *fatwa* from NU declaring that IUDs were only permissible if inserted by the husband (Hooker 2003: 171) does not seem to have had an impact on the massive promotion of IUDs. Disciplining the female body, which is associated with the construction of femininity in many Indonesian societies, for example, in the forms of demeanour and control of women's sexuality, has been homogenized and used in the exercise of state power. The state-sponsored services push the model that husbands and wives must make decisions about contraception together, but at the same time, the 'target population' is always women. The implication of the growth in importance of private sector providers since the 1990s is more than economic: women who can afford to pay for contraception will potentially exercise more choice in regard to their fertility.

Hence the programme reinforces the construction of women's citizenship resting on their difference as mothers. Family planning as a New Order project located reproductive responsibility in women, rather than in women and men as equal participants in conception. The pre-modern methods of fertility regulation used throughout the archipelago, such as abstinence and non-coital sex placed responsibility on men as well as women (Alexander 1986). Modern contraceptive techniques tend to replace these practices, and their widespread use contributes to a reworking of ideas about female sexuality, such as the woman being always ready for sexual relations, as well as being responsible for controlling her own fertility, and a 'hydraulic' model of male sexuality that eschews virtue in abstinence and control.

Formally, the programme has promoted the idea that a married couple should jointly discuss and decide what to do. Yet the woman is the real 'target', and she can 'accept' modern contraceptive techniques without involving her husband. Knowing this and feeling the pressure to achieve high rates of acceptance, more than a few programme officials were tempted to encourage wives to enrol without their husbands' knowledge or approval.

One strategy employed by the programme was military-style campaigns (termed '*safari*') in which often military medical personnel participated as part of their designated 'dual role' (*dwifungsi*) in social and political affairs, as well as defence and security (Habsjah-Koesoemo Oetoyo 2000). In one such mass family planning drive that I witnessed in Makassar in 1990, a potential 'acceptor' who had previously agreed to be fitted with an IUD had subsequently declined to do so because her husband had refused to endorse her decision. The woman doctor who was ready to fit the IUD tried to persuade her to go ahead, arguing that her husband need not know about it. At another Makassar site, a wife reported that she had been beaten by her husband when he discovered that

she had secretly fitted an IUD, the facts of the matter coming to his attention when she declined to have sex with him in the period of required abstinence consequent to the insertion of the device.

The state-sponsored programme has been criticized by social activists for its denial of human rights (Habsjah-Koesoemo Oetoyo 2000). Following the 1969 NU *fatwa* that supported contraception provided it was intended to manage pregnancy and the husband was included in decision-making, Muslimat (supported by NU) became involved in the provision of reproductive and maternal and child health services based on an idea of women's reproductive rights. The NU Central Board expressed concern about the use of force to compel people to use contraception, arguing that the solution was to provide better information and motivation (Machusrah 2005: 66). Aisyiyah also became involved in the provision of reproductive and maternal and child health, and both organizations established maternity clinics and hospitals across the country (Istiadah 1995: 10; Candland and Nurjanah 2004). The government requested NU be involved to secure mass support for KB: in the process, NU women's organizations were able to find 'democratic space' in the authoritarian system to provide a standard of care with more concerns for women's reproductive rights, which the government formally endorsed after the 1994 ICPD (International Conference on Population and Development) in Cairo.[8] The women's organizations have been able to obtain support from *kiai* (religious leaders) for their reproductive health services.

The official position that family planning is a conjugal decision and the practice of exhorting women (in some cases) to take decisions on their own are strategies that may conflict with pre-existing values concerning the control of fertility. For example, it is not clear that all the constituent cultural groups in Indonesia share the view that the use of modern contraception is a conjugal decision. I found in 1984, that of the women in the mining town of Soroako in South Sulawesi who used modern and hence mostly female-centred methods of preventing pregnancy (an extraordinary 84.5 per cent of eligible women), 43 per cent reported having first taken this step on their own without consulting their husbands. Their attitude was summed up by one woman: 'we have the babies so we should be able to decide' (Robinson 1989). Some of these women expressly rejected the idea that there was a problem with male doctors inserting IUDs, separating the doctor's clinical interest in their bodies from a sexualized gaze.

There are also differences in the degree of acceptance of the legitimate role of the state in regulating personal behaviour. For example, not all Islamic groups have accepted the family planning programme and the assumption that the state can intervene in their personal lives. Taking a firm stand on the 'naturalness' of reproduction within Muslim families, some of the new middle-class reformist Muslims are returning to large family sizes against the national trend.

In the early 1990s, according to official data, more them half of all married women of child-bearing age in Indonesia were using some form of contraception growing from 'virtually zero' in the 1960s (Adioetomo 1997:233). Modern contraception has been enthusiastically embraced in the densely populated regions

of Java and Bali, although it has been less successful in the poorer and less populated outer regions, in 1994 for example, only 32 per cent of fertile, married women in Nusa Tenggara Timur used contraception.

The demographer Terry Hull (1987) has questioned the position which is often argued by the programme's admirers, that the success can be explained by programme characteristics, such as the large number of auxiliary workers, including volunteers, and the imaginative and flexible methods in getting supplies to the villages. For Hull, it is critical to understand the underlying social and cultural phenomena of fertility decline, in particular the genesis of a 'felt need' for fertility limitation in the light of broader social, economic and cultural change.

The following example illustrates the way in which a programme succeeded not only because of its efficiency, but also as a consequence of fundamental changes in economic and social life—due to New Order development strategies—producing a new 'felt need' on the part of parents. The take-up of contraception related to new economic and gender regimes.

Soroako in South Sulawesi is a mining town established at the site of a mining and processing facility by the International Nickel Company (INCO) of Canada (Robinson 1986). Beginning in 1984, INCO established its own version of the state's family planning programme through its medical services. This effort yielded extremely high contraceptive prevalence rates: over 80 per cent among the indigenous inhabitants of the original village of Soroako, and well above 50 per cent in the town as a whole. Company fieldworkers were extremely proactive, seeking out the wives of employees in their homes to offer supplies, incentives and advice. For example, soon after giving birth a woman would be visited by a programme officer. Often the visit would result in her being injected with the long-lasting contraceptive Depo Provera, deemed appropriate for breast-feeding women. Depo Provera users would be visited at home when injections were due. Couples who had chosen condoms were visited and urged to 'upgrade' their method, that is, to a more reliable but also more invasive method. Women reported that they were questioned with regard to contraceptive use when they sought medical treatment for themselves or their children at the company clinic. The company position was described by one man as 'not forced but obliged (*diharuskan*)'.

However, the extremely high rates of contraceptive use among Soroakan people cannot be explained only by the zealous pursuit of the programme's goals. Another informant agreed that while her and the other wives' use of contraception had been influenced by company policy, they felt that they had been '*diharuskan*'. But she added, 'it also fits with our way of thinking'. Her remarks concurred with Hull's proposition about high prevalence resting on desire to limit births formed independently of programme activities. Where did this desire come from, in this instance?

In the agricultural economy of the past the household was the unit of production and the labour of young children had economic value. But mining had transformed Soroako. Wage labour had become the principal form of productive

work, but it was only available to young adult males. In such an economy, high fertility was no longer an economic advantage due to limited niches for child labour.

Reproductive behaviour is also interpreted through strongly held values about responsible parenthood. The great majority of Soroakans understood that the economic transformations associated with the mine development necessitated lower fertility. To their 'way of thinking', limiting fertility meant exercising one's parental responsibility to provide a better future for one's children, especially through education. Previously, land had secured the means of a livelihood based on agricultural labour. But the land has now gone into the company's estate. In the new setting, education had become the resource on which they pinned their hopes for a secure livelihood.

A woman commented to me that in the past people assumed that children's labour could be deployed in tasks such as hoeing or collecting firewood. 'Many children, much fortune' was the common saying, which is heard all over Indonesia. People did not think about school. But now, she said, 'we think about school for our children'. A man reinforced her point from a different angle: economic conditions were tight. Working for INCO was the only hope, and opportunities there were limited. He complained of losing out to others in the company who were better off, including immigrant bosses, mainly from Java, who had been given more authority and higher pay. Why? 'Because they have education and we don't'.

The reliance on wage labour in Soroako had instituted a new gender regime predicated on the separation of work from domestic life. Most women of childbearing age were dependent spouses of male breadwinners who did not have income of their own. This was keenly felt by the indigenous Soroakan women, undergoing a rapid change in their economic and social circumstances. For example, their older children who might have contributed to the care of younger siblings, were away at school all day, or had left Soroako to pursue the new goal of post-primary education. A greater share of the responsibility for child care had fallen to these women, and they were feeling it as a burden. That reinforced the rationality of spacing births, 'so you are not harassed', as one woman put it. Hence, the success of the family planning programme in Soroako rested in part on economic changes that have restructured relations between men and women, reinforcing an identification of women with a domestic sphere, excluded from the public world of work (Robinson 1983). That is, the changes in attitudes to fertility came about in response to broad economic changes resulting from the New Order pursuit of foreign investment. These led to a reshaping of social life, including in the realm of sexuality and personal life (see Chapter 5).

As a mining town hosting a foreign corporation, Soroako is not typical of towns elsewhere in the archipelago. The particular way in which the economic changes in Indonesia impact on fertility decision-making need not be the same in all cases. For example, in some densely populated parts of the archipelago, an important incentive to limit fertility is the disappearance of niches in the rural economy

which can absorb child labour; in other places (especially eastern Indonesia), people are still convinced of the economic utility of large families. In Soroako, an important aspect of the economic changes consequent to foreign investment in mining was the erosion of a sphere for women's economic participation outside the home (Robinson 1983). Government policy has had contrasting effects in other parts of the country, for example, eroding male work (discussed in the next chapter). The family planning programme and the wide distribution of modern contraceptives have been important forces shaping new definitions of sexuality. (This is taken up in Chapter 5).

Until the period of the presidency of Abdurrahman Wahid (1999–2001), the family planning programme was driven by the central government through the BKKBN (Badan Kordinasi Keluarga Berencana Negeri—National Family Planning Coordination Board). During the Adurrachman presidency, the Minister of Women Affairs Khofifah Indar Parawansa also became the head of BKKBN. She changed its motto from 'small and prosperous family' to 'quality family' and focused on increasing male contraceptive use with some limited success (Indar Parawansa 2002). The emphasis on family welfare consolidated a trend that had begun in the early 1990s under the leadership of Haryono Suyono, the chief architect of Indonesia's programme, in response to criticism of the authoritarian methods used (Hull and Adioetomo 2002). There had been some efforts under the Habibie presidency (1998–9) to act on the concerns for improved quality of clinical services, which had been raised at the 1994 ICPD in Cairo. Picking up on the international framing of reproductive health issues in terms of human rights, Khofifah enlisted a group of middle-level reformers in the BKKBN to set out an agenda for change which Hull and Adioetomo (2002: 242) comment would have sounded 'heretical' just a year before: the need to secure reproductive rights (in line with the Cairo ICPD declaration), the need to overcome the gender bias of the agency, addressing the moral crisis in the nation that allowed human rights abuses, and the failure to attend to the reproductive health needs of adolescents. Khofifah instituted a 'sea change' in which the previous goals of fertility reduction and enhancement of family welfare were replaced by a commitment by the organization to the empowerment of women by way of a client-centred approach. One of Indar Parawansa's radical initiatives was to ensure that pregnant schoolgirls would have the right to continue their education (Indar Parawansa 2002).

The future of the programme became a matter of concern during the Asian financial crisis (*krismon*) from 1997 when it was feared that many women would not be able to afford supplies. Subsequent survey results show that while there was a decline in the number of women using the relatively expensive IUDs and condoms, there were increases in the number of women using cheaper injectables and implants, but the number of women using the contraceptive pill remained stable. Foreign donors helped keep these numbers up, especially by providing expensive methods to the relatively poor, while the middle classes (who did not qualify for assistance) were shifting to the cheaper methods. The number reporting use of traditional methods also declined in this period (Hull and Adioetomo 2002: 239).

The move to decentralization of government functions to district governments from 2001 has left the role of national level state bodies uncertain. The radical change in direction promoted by Khofifah faces the reality of fragmentation of service delivery by a range of agencies in the newly empowered districts. Another challenge to the taken-for-granted success of the programme as an aspect of Indonesian modernity has also been thrown into question by recent evidence of increasing fertility among young professionals, who are celebrating the value of larger families, in some cases under the influence of Islamization, and also the resurgence of regional nationalisms which see higher fertility linked to increasing the power of 'locals' over migrants.

## Marriage law[9]

Within the modernizing regime of the New Order, the 'private' aspects of women's lives have been brought into the state arena, with the state challenging the claims of other dominant ideologies—in particular Islam, but also local cultural traditions—to regulate personal and family relations. This was evident in the conflict over the introduction of a secular marriage law, in the face of stringent opposition from religious groups, particularly Islam which challenged the right of the state to intervene in matters of personal life (see Chapter 2; Martyn 2005, Chapter 6; Robinson 2006).

The Marriage Law, passed in 1974 (with enabling legislation in 1975), provided for minimum age at marriage, provided protection of women from marriage against their will and gave wives rights to divorce equal to those of husbands. It was on the surface the act of a secular, modernizing regime continuing the agenda of nationalist groups, which aimed to weed out *feodalism* from the realm of personal relations as well as from society at large. Indeed, as noted in the previous chapter, the introduction of a secular marriage law was one of the principal demands of the first congress of Indonesian women's organizations, held in 1928 (Vreede de-Stuers 1960). Operating within a liberal discourse of 'equality', the early Indonesian feminists argued for equal relations for men and women, including within the 'private' sphere of the family—free choice marriage and equal rights to divorce. In many ways, the law exemplifies the contradictions of the New Order. The timing of its passage, however, indicates that it was not just a response to women's aspirations, as it was also part of the New Order assault on high rates of population growth (particularly through legislated minimum ages for marriage), and so an important complement to the fledgling family planning programme (Soewondo 1977).

In the case of citizens professing Islamic faith, divorce was still to be handled by religious courts, however. In another move to strengthen the rights of women vis-à-vis men, men were forbidden to take second wives without the permission of the first wife. Thus Indonesia pursued a strategy followed in other countries with majority Muslim populations; rather than an outright ban on polygyny, the state 'ties it up in red tape', forcing prospective polygamists to pass several administrative tests to demonstrate compliance with permissible grounds and financial capacity (Robinson 2006).

The marriage law enshrines the 'familist' notion of the husband as the head of the family and the wife as responsible for the household. Official data collection is based on the presumption of a male household head. This is regardless of local practices, in which, for example, older women have social power. In Soroako, I know old women, especially widows, who are significant, or even principal decision-makers in issues such as the disposition of land, or the family response to a proposal of marriage for one of their granddaughters. Such women appear in official documents as living in households headed by their sons, even when the latter are young, unmarried men without authority. Men are always the representatives of the household in dealing with the state except in the context of official women's organizations. For example, in the case of a water supply project in Lombok (which I reviewed for the foreign donor in 1989), in spite of the fact that the principal users of water were women, the official lists of members of water user groups who were deemed responsible for the maintenance of facilities on a daily basis were all male—the household heads. These were empty shells: in practice, the maintenance of the facilities was organized informally by the women, sidestepping the inappropriate organizational initiatives of the local government. This aspect of the law—the legal circumscription of women's social roles—has been the particular focus of criticism by activist women and is under fire in the Reform period (see Chapter 6).

What have been the consequences of the marriage law? In the past 30 years, there has been a rise in the age at marriage for men and women, so dramatic as to be termed a 'revolution' by one commentator (Jones 1994: 61), but this cannot be attributed to legislative change: the relevant factors include the expansion of primary school education and the opening up of new employment opportunities for women (Jones 1994, Chapter 3). While differential power exists between men and women, and between generations, it has been difficult for a young woman living at home to refuse her parents' request for her to marry a particular young man, or for a woman to refuse the request of her spouse for her agreement to him taking a second wife. However, the new law in circulation as part of public discourse provides a powerful legitimation for young people who wish to exercise their choice of a marriage partner. Also, economic changes which put resources in the hands of young people rather than the old, provide a material basis for exercising free choice (Robinson 1986, Chapter 10). This is not to say that arranged marriage is always negative for women (see Chapter 5).

## The PP10 regulation

A curious sequela of the new marriage law was the initiative to even further limit the rights of civil servants to polygamous marriages. In a seeming contradiction to the positioning of civil servants' wives as subordinate to their husbands, DW leaders used the organization and its official cachet to resist their vulnerability to unfair treatment by the husbands on whom they are dependent.

In 1981, DW asked President Suharto to formulate a special law to protect the wives of civil servants from polygamy and divorce. Suharto responded with a regulation, Presidential Decree No. 10 (PP10) of 1983, promulgated for symbolic effect on April 21, Kartini Day. Under this regulation, a male civil servant is obliged to seek permission from his superiors before divorcing or taking a second wife, in the latter case, in addition to the consent of his wife as required by the 1974 law (indeed, such permission is often coerced). The regulation enabled an aggrieved wife to submit a complaint through the head of DW in the husband's office—the complainant's husband's superior's wife—who then brought the matter to the attention of her own husband, that is, the superior male official. He in turn could withhold permission, effectively overruling civil law and religious regulation, giving the state a legitimate role in regulating the private lives of civil servants. A husband who refused to abide by his superior's decision could be punished, for example, by being denied career advancement. The state bureaucracy thus acquired the 'natural' rights of parental authority over civil servants.

The regulation offered women state protection in their capacity as wives and mothers, their social contribution most valued by the New Order regime, which also used state power to regulate their fertility (civil servants received a rice allowance as part of their remuneration for up to two children). The PP10 regulation gave them some power in their relationships with their husbands, at the same time, reinforcing restrictive definitions of femininity (Suryakusuma 1996, 2004). This regulation intended to strengthen the vulnerable position of women as dependent spouses, but in fact, it made them more vulnerable to their husbands in that it provided an incentive for men to engage in clandestine relationships with other women. Also, if the civil servant's wife requested divorce for reasons other than that he had taken a second wife, she forfeited any claim on his wage. Logsdon (1985) predicted that this would force women to stay in unhappy unions. The state ideology encouraged civil servants' official wives to be 'career wives', supporting their husbands in their careers. Their time was absorbed in the activities of the official women's organization, which increased their economic vulnerability should the marriage fail. Logsdon's prediction has been borne out in subsequent years. There have been frequent reports of high-ranking men having illicit second wives, including news reports of cases in which the abandoned second 'wives' made public demands to have the men (who had often fathered several children) continue to support them.

In the Reform period, there have been demands for the PP10 to be withdrawn, especially by men wishing to assert their rights to polygamy. The regime change has been accompanied by demands for the government to revisit the 1974 Marriage Law, with feminists targeting the definitions of male and female roles, and some men wishing to reassert their rights to polygamy, free of state interference. Some Islamists have even argued for the repeal of the secular marriage law, and a return to the exclusive right of Islam to regulate marriage and divorce. (This is taken up further in Chapter 7).

## Conclusion

The New Order state gender regime is exemplified by the 1974 Marriage Law and the family planning programme, in which personal life was brought within the arena of governmental regulation, with the state challenging the rights of religions (particularly Islam) and local cultural traditions to regulate the spheres of personal and family relations. The close association of women with wifehood and motherhood in official rituals and rhetoric of the New Order express the effort to subsume the diversity of gender constructions around the archipelago under one national definition of femininity, discursively rendered through organizations such as PKK and DW, and the family planning programme. The formalization of male household heads delivered a patriarchal dividend to non-elite males, for example, obscuring problems of domestic violence (just as the familist ideology obscured state violence) and elevating men's rights to sexual and domestic service from their wives. The attempt at unification of women's citizenship was consistent with the New Order imperative to suppress forms of identification outside the definitions provided by the state; a denial of the 'multi-layered citizenship' (Yuval-Davis and Anthias 1989) imagined by the nationalists in their motto 'Unity in Diversity'.[10] The homogenizing imperatives of the New Order have been under challenge in the move to regional autonomy in the post-Suharto era, but the conservative aspect of this challenge has been an attempt in some regions to further sequester women in the home on the basis of implementing sharia law through local regulations (see Chapter 7).

The constitution of women's citizenship in terms of difference, the equation of women's citizenship with motherhood, and the associated qualities of wifeliness that characterized New Order gender ideology were fundamental to the state ideology and its family foundation (*azas kekeluargaan*). Patriarchal authority was essential to the character of the New Order and the capitalist modernity that it aspired to. The family trope, as a model for authority relations within the state, 'sanctions social hierarchy within a putative organic unity of interests. Since the subordination of woman to man and child to adult [is] deemed a natural fact, other forms of social hierarchy [can] be depicted in familial terms, to guarantee social difference as a fact of nature' (McClintock 1993: 64).

The familist ideology of the New Order did more than order relations between men and women: the patriarchal family provided a naturalized model of hierarchy and authority for society at large and for the exercise of political power. It validated not only the exclusion of women from public life but also the absolute authority of those in power. From this trope flows the logic of the 'unnatural' character of political criticism and the legitimation of the management of dissent and opposition through authoritarian strategies. The ideological manipulation of the family trope by authoritarian rulers is evident in 'Asian Values' debates in neighbouring Southeast Asian countries. In Singapore, for example, there has been a stress on an inherited Confucian 'essence' which encompasses an idea of a patriarchal family (Heng and Devan 1992). In Malaysia, Dr Mahathir has stressed the unique qualities of the Malay, strongly rooted in their Islamic religion: in this vision, the Malay family and women in their role as mothers are fundamental to an Islamic modernity (Ong 1995).

The contemporary Indonesian woman claims her place in the 'imagined community' of the Indonesian nation on the basis of her difference, rather than on the basis of claims for equality, as in the case of the early nationalist feminists who embraced an idea of encompassment of difference under the rubric of equality (Yuval-Davis and Werbner 1999). Pateman argues that the political question for feminists becomes: how to bring women and difference into the political arena, that is to 'subvert and change the manner in which women have already been incorporated, and so transform the relation between "equality" and difference' (1992: 27)? For Indonesia, this question has implications not only for the political struggles of Indonesian women, but also for the future of democracy for the nation. Men's position in the household is no longer so secure in state policy. DW and PKK are no longer compulsory and domestic violence was the subject of legislation in 2004. New Order gender relationships and the associated vision for women are under challenge as many Indonesians struggle to establish a democratic polity in the post-New Order era.

Before the 1997 monetary crisis, the economic development of the New Order period was reflected in material improvements in many women's lives. The ideological project of reformulating gender relations, however, was often in contradiction with changes in women's social roles arising on the basis of broader economic and social policies that are not gender neutral in their effects. Ironically, in broadcasting an essentialized image of the ideal Indonesian woman as a loyal wife and dutiful mother, the New Order denied the transformation and diversification of women's roles that its own relentless campaign for material expansion had helped to bring about. These changes are the subject of the next chapter.

# 4 The Gendered Economy

## New Order policies and the transformations in women's work

The economy is an important site of gender inequality, whether in regard to the gender order of enterprises, including the sexual division of labour in tasks, or the separation between the world of work and domestic relations that is characteristic of modern/capitalist societies. *Pembangunan*, or economic development based on capital investment, was the signature of the New Order, entailing close links to global capital. This chapter investigates the unintended consequences for the gender regime in Indonesia consequent on integration into the global economy: changes at odds with the ideological project of the gender regime promoted through 'State Ibuism'. Shifts in gender regimes associated with production are linked with changes in the gender arrangements of households and idealized notions of femininity and masculinity. Gender-specific issues in workplaces have led to demands on the state to defend the interests of women workers as well as protecting them within the family, for example through marriage law reform.

The New Order of President Suharto rejected the radical nationalist style of his predecessor who eschewed foreign investment. Rather than assuming that Indonesia's development towards prosperity rested on its abundant human resources, the New Order took up a Rostowian position: Indonesia's economic 'problems' reflected a lack of capital and know-how, which could be overcome through foreign investment. In the economic history of the New Order, the 1970s are chiefly remembered for the oil boom and natural resource extraction through opening the economy to foreign investment. Following a period of import substitution industrialization, during which factories were established to locally manufacture consumer items, such as batteries, medicines, toothpaste and sweetened condensed milk (all heavily protected by import duties), the New Order took the turn of many developing countries in the 1970s–80s and began attracting foreign investment in light manufacturing—textiles, garments and electronics (Sayogyo and Wahyuni 1994). When world oil prices fell in the 1980s, raising the need for new sources of revenue, a shift toward manufacturing became an even more urgent national priority. From 1983 a series of decrees incrementally deregulated the environment for investors, resulting in a changing composition

of exports, away from primary materials such as oil and rubber toward manufactured goods such as garments and appliances. This is one of the most important structural shifts in the Indonesian economy since the 1960s (Booth 1999). Even though government policy encouraging manufacturing originally envisaged decreasing the number of under- and unemployed males, the light manufacturing factories preferentially employed young women, reversing the trend of the earlier import substitution industrialization, which had favoured male employment (Wolf 1984: 230). The opening of the economy to global capital under the New Order transformed the social and economic participation of men and women in ways contradictory to the prevailing state ideology enshrined in state policy through the GBHN and the 1974 Marriage Law which presumed men as the principal, even sole breadwinners, and which defined women in primarily domestic roles.

The industrialization strategy transformed the economy. Agriculture, where men and women work together, declined as a share of GDP (Gross Domestic Product) from 53.9 per cent in 1960 to 19.55 per cent in 1991, while manufacturing as a share of GDP climbed from 8.4 per cent to 21.3 per cent in the same period (Robison 1996: 79). On a global scale, the new world market factories, producing clothing, textiles, footwear and electronics, have been associated with rapid growth in the employment of women (Elson and Pearson 1981). Central Statistics Bureau (Badan Pusat Statistik or BPS) figures showed an overall feminization of Indonesia's industrial workforce in the period 1971–94. Out of 24 sectors, for which longitudinal data was available, 19 evidenced feminization (for example, in the clothing, textiles and footwear, and the lime and cement sectors). Only a few sectors experienced masculinization. These included paper and paper products, chemicals and the declining rubber industry (*Jurnal Perempuan* 1997). A largely feminized industrial workforce introduced a new element in the Indonesian economy. Women accounted for 80 per cent of the workforce in the textiles, clothing and footwear industries, and in the late 1990s this sector accounted for 55 per cent of Indonesia's industrial exports (Tjandraningsih 2000). However, in 1997, the Asian monetary crisis hit Indonesia and manufacturing industry was one of the sectors of the economy that suffered because of its dependence on imported inputs (Cameron 2002).

Another important economic change under the New Order was the opening up of Indonesian mineral reserves to foreign investors, beginning with the Freeport copper mine in West Papua in 1966. In contrast to manufacturing, the mining sector retained a preference for male labourers, and company towns were characterized by a gender regime expressive of the government ideology of maternal citizenship. Connell (1987) notes the masculinity of mining as work: Images of mining as human endeavor incorporate the imperatives of physical strength, endurance and filth, all characteristics of masculinized work. Indeed the body effects of such male endeavours are 'one of the main ways in which the power of men becomes "naturalized", i.e. seen as part of the order of nature' (Connell 1987: 85). Mine workers are invariably 'pit men', or 'labouring men' (Lahiri-Dutt and Macintyre 2006). Until the 2003 revisions of the labour law

(see below), Indonesia, like many other countries, banned women from working in the mines, especially in underground mines (Robinson 1983). The mining community of Soroako exemplified this: women were most evident as housewives (especially the wives of professional and managerial employees) and the few jobs created for women were in the service sectors of the new mining towns as nurses and teachers, or household servants and sex workers (Robinson 1983, 1996). In modern mining sites the mine usually is no longer an underground pit, but the idea of mining as men's work prevails and keeps women out of the lucrative occupations in operational and managerial positions as masculine areas of work. However, just as there were shifts in the gender regime that characterized manufacturing in the 1980s, mining has in the last decade experienced change, with women beginning to be employed as operators of heavy mining equipment (Lahiri-Dutt and Robinson 2008).

The volume of the growth in women's industrial employment obscures the fact that significant numbers of women still labour in the unregulated sectors of the economy, and the increase in female share of service and trade sector employment 'has been far more significant' (Manning 1998: 245). As noted in Chapter 1, across the archipelago women have been extensively involved in production outside the home, which Errington (1990) identifies as one of the reasons for the oft-stated Western view of the high status of women in the archipelago. Apart from their significant role in agricultural production, small trading is an established arena of women's economic participation (see Alexander [1987] and Jellinek [1977, 1978]).

So strong was the ideological commitment of the New Order to the defining of women's citizenship in terms of domestic roles that it was not until 1993 that women appeared as workers in the GBHN. Previous iterations placed almost sole emphasis on their responsibility for healthy and prosperous families. The new approach in part reflected the influence of middle-class women in decision-making in the bureaucracy, where they have been able to shape the formal expression of government policy. However, while recognizing the significant role women were playing in the economy, the wording of the 1993 GBHN emphasized not so much women's rights to seek opportunities, but their importance as 'quality human resources' for Indonesia's development (Sen 1998a). In line with the New Order tenet that men are the household heads and hence principal breadwinners, women, especially in informal sector occupations, tend to say their work is '*sampingan*' (on the side) or just helping (*bantu-bantu*) their husbands. It is so even when they are the principal providers for everyday existence. Women's informal sector work is often carried out in the home, allowing them to combine domestic and income-earning activities. Such home-based enterprises commonly use family labour. Jellinek (1977) describes the ingenious response of a food-stall proprietor, with a need of more hands to assist in her successful business, persuading her husband to take a younger second wife.

Women working under the piece work or 'putting-out' system are among the most marginalized and oft-forgotten informal sector workers. This form of work

has been practised for a long time, notably in Java: at least since the 1940s in the garment industry but also in other sectors—for example, the packaging for factory-produced traditional medicines. Piece work is particularly dominated by women, although more men are entering these occupations as traditional male jobs disappear. Even if the workers say it is only a 'side job', they work long hours and it is often the principal source of household income with both adults and children working (Hartiningsih 2000: 204–5). The putting-out system has more recently been used in the modern manufacturing sector, where women perform part of the manufacturing process for clothing and textiles—including export manufacture by multinational corporations—in their own home. Whereas from an objective point of view, these women are highly exploited—working long hours for extremely low rates of pay and no health or insurance benefits—in a sector that avoids even minimum regulation by the state, these extremely poor women may report that they are happy with their employment; they are able to combine work in the home with child care and caring for sick family members (Hartiningsih 2000: 209). Work relations structured in this way do not pose a challenge to the normative definitions of masculinity and femininity, or to the official gender regime that is predicated on a separation of the private world of the family and a public world of employment. Such work is available to people with little education or skill, who are less readily accommodated by the formal sector. Hartiningsih contends that there is often a sense of mutual obligation between piece-workers and the employers, which ensures that the workers can find paid employment at times when they need money. Price (1983: 103) affirms the culture of mutual obligation in a home-based cloth production industry on the north coast of Java in the 1970s. Business owners occasionally paid workers out of their own savings to ensure a weekly payment. The managers, mostly women, needed complex managerial skills in order to maintain the flow of work and judge quality in making payments to workers. Balinese home-based *songket* weavers (Nakatani 1999) sometimes work for entrepreneurs who provide the capital and also small credit for ritual and other urgent needs, but others prefer to work on their own account. Their home production is clearly acknowledged as productive work by fellow villagers, but the women feel pressured by the competing demands on their time from weaving and domestic demands, including rituals. They have also experienced competition from men taking up this traditionally female work as it becomes more lucrative and as earnings from agriculture decline (Nakatani 1995). The New Order reconfiguring of the family and household as separate from the economy has negatively impacted on batik workshops in Solo where women entrepreneurs organized both household-based production and marketing (Brenner 1998).

The New Order pursued an agenda of increasing productivity in agriculture. It has been argued that the commitment to 'Green Revolution' technology in agriculture—high yielding hybrid varieties of rice seed that need massive fertilizer inputs and the protection of chemical pesticides—has had the consequence of displacing women's labour in agriculture, at least in Java where most of the studies have been conducted. The new rice varieties require different harvesting

technology: the replacement of the finger knife (*ani ani*) with the sickle has been accompanied by a move to the use of migrating bands of contract workers, usually male. Thus, local harvest labour, which included women, has been displaced. Similarly, the new rice lends itself to the use of mechanical rice hullers, which have replaced hand pounding of rice (formerly a source of employment for rural women). So even in agriculture, the preserve of family labour and personalized connections, there has been an increase in the use of waged labour and an associated marginalization of women. Manning (1998: 247, n. 17), however, after reviewing the evidence on rural women's labour, concludes that while 'labour-augmenting technology generally favored males', the overall trend in Java in the period 1971–90 was a 'slight tendency for females to increase their share of agricultural jobs' (ibid.: 245). In the period leading up to the 1997 financial crisis, female unemployment in rural areas was slightly higher than male, however (Cameron 2002: 148–9); and returns to labour for women remained much lower for men (Manning 1998: 246; Cameron 2002). The 2004 National Labour Force Survey (SAKERNAS) indicated that almost half of Indonesia's 33.14 million women workers were poor agricultural labourers.

Nonetheless, in many regions, there is a decline in traditional rural jobs that is pushing women into informal sector work (see for example Connor 1983; Hartiningsih 2000). A group of home-based tailors in Klaten (Central Java), who had experienced difficulties in finding agricultural employment exemplify the process. Owing to fragmentation of land holdings by inheritance, the conversion of much farm land for industry and housing, and mechanization of farm work, there is insufficient rural employment and the informal sector absorbs the migrants who flock to urban areas seeking work. There are millions of men and women employed in the informal sector, scattered throughout the villages, small towns and the slums of any large city. The typical Javanese attitude of *nrima ing pandum dan pasrah* (patient acceptance of, and resignation to one's fate) makes the burden of a hard life easier to bear without complaint. A woman states: 'If we were to complain . . . our good fortune would vanish' (Hartiningsih 2000: 210–11). Piece-workers tend to be amongst the poorest of these workers, because their pay rates are very low and their work is often irregular.

In the cities of New Order Indonesia, as an idealized modernity was pursued by the regime, informal sector occupations deemed at odds with the official vision were squeezed by authorities (see Murray 1991) through tighter regulation of the informal sector and policies favouring the formal sector. Streets were cleared of hawkers and street markets were relocated to shopping complexes where renting space is more expensive (Cribb 1999). When people in lower income urban neighbourhoods are moved into modern apartment buildings, they can find it difficult to continue home-based informal sector businesses in flats that are smaller and less accessible from the street than their former dwellings. Such relocations hit home-based manufacturing and food production. Reduced options may displace poor women toward less remunerative and less flexible work in offices and factories, driving them to prostitution or to take the risk of labour migration.

An non-government organisation (NGO) credit programme for female informal sector workers reported that most participants saw their work as 'helping their husband' while they 'take care of the household', even though over 70 per cent of them earned more than their husbands (Djamal 2000: 172). In general, the women sought work out of economic necessity and often felt a tension with their presumed primary role as housewives. Many had a number of income-earning activities, including food production, sewing for garment industries, selling in the market or a streetside stall and taking in laundry. The picture of poor women having diverse sources of income, including petty trading, has also been observed for women in the agrarian sector: men in contrast have a more limited range of economic activities (Stoler 1977).

For women in the NGO credit programme, their desired loan could be as little as Rp 10,000 (A$1.20). Government credit programmes, even when notionally supporting 'small business', do not deal with enterprises of this scale and have tended to benefit more men than women. For example, a recent government-sponsored small business credit scheme considered Rp 15 million start-up credit as too small (Djamal 2000). Government regulations have required women to gain consent from husbands to obtain formal credit (Katjasungkana 1999). Credit policies which disfavour women's small enterprises were a consequence of the New Order assumption of the pre-eminence of men in the household and the linked rationale of making men more central to development.

Many small women traders themselves provide credit to customers on low incomes and/or irregular wages, for example providing meals to itinerant construction workers who settle their debt when they have been paid. Indraswari (2006) describes the critical role of kiosks (*warung*) in an urban poor community in the West Java city of Bandung that provide daily necessities in very small quantities as well as cheap meals, usually on credit, to people on low and irregular incomes.

Rapid economic growth under the New Order was associated not only with the rapid increase of an industrial working class and proletarianization of lower class women, but also with the growth of a middle class. The literature on this topic is not always clear on what constitutes this middle class, but it is usually characterized as a culturally defined group linked by high levels of consumption and a modern lifestyle, whose wealth was associated with the development of the economy under the New Order (see for example Tanter and Young 1990; Robison 1996). Women in this class come under pressure, including from global media, to conform to an emerging middle class ideology that identifies women with consumption (see also Jayawardena 1986: 9).

Whereas the major accounts of the Indonesian middle class assume a male citizen, there is a 'growing minority of women who belong to the middle classes in their own right as participants in the economy ... and not only as daughters, wives and mothers of male members of those classes' (Sen 1998a: 36–7). The professional woman who 'works hard, pays her own bills and whose fantasies might include a white man' (ibid.: 54) is the target of advertising, in contrast to the still very common use of women as 'mums' in ads promoting

food, beverages and cleaning products (ibid.: 47). The iconic professional women take their places in the phantasmagoric modernity of the New Order and, along with the women industrial workers or migrant workers, attest to the further fracturing of the official presumed unity of women's role by New Order economic strategies in terms of class differences rather than the cultural variations previously discussed. Brenner (1998) points to the anxiety generated by career women evident in media debates. She argues that this anxiety arises out of the hegemonic discourse of domesticated femininity that contrasts with the taken-for-granted nature of women's economic participation in pre-New Order Indonesia.

The state can be seen as 'doing gender' in the patterns of public sector employment. Women's participation in the public service grew rapidly in the New Order period, with the number of female civil servants doubling in the decade to 1984 (Logdson 1985). By 2000, while 38 per cent of civil servants were women, they occupied only 16 per cent of decision-making positions (Echelons 1–V), indicating the masculinist culture at the top (Oey-Gardiner 2002: 108; see also Connell 2000: 102). However, women have become well represented in the middle ranks, with 41 per cent of civil servants at level III (Oey-Gardiner 2002: 108). Education and health departments especially have been feminized. Much of the windfall profits from the 1970s oil price boom were invested in improving government services. The expansion of primary schools and primary health care centres saw an increase in women civil servants—mostly as nurses and teachers. Their prominence in public education and public health helps explain why women are more strongly represented in the middle levels of the civil service: just over half of all primary school teachers and nearly a quarter of government doctors are women. This sex segmentation of the civil service expresses the internal gender regime of the state.

Women in senior positions in both the private sector and the bureaucracy have had some impact on the manner in which women's interests are represented in state policy, and this will be discussed in Chapter 6. While some of the expansion of women's involvement in the service sector, including the expansion of employment in the civil service, is a consequence of educated women entering into the professions, for less educated women, prostitution (which will be discussed further in Chapter 5) and domestic service are the most significant service sector occupations (Manning 1998: 247–8).

The greater linkages to the global economy not only created work opportunities in the domestic economy, but also were instrumental in opening the Indonesian labour market to international labour flows. In the early 1980s, Indonesia planned to export male labour, but the available 'niches' in the global economy were for female labour (Robinson 1991a, 2000a). Women working overseas have become an important source of foreign exchange earnings. Unlike earlier generations of international labour migrants from Asia, who went to work in rural areas (plantations, mines, etc.), the 'growth poles' in the current phase of globalization are the cities, and usually 'organized around labour-intensive industries and services' (Nonini 2002: 13). Indonesian international labour

migration exhibits the features of the 'new' migration: globalization (more and more countries are involved), acceleration (growth in volume), differentiation (involving different categories of migrants from the same country), and a process of 'feminization' (Castles and Miller 1993: 8). Much of this labour movement is unregulated or even illegal, and hence the workers are liable to exploitation. In a world in which labour has become an export commodity for many of the nations struggling to meet the needs and expectations of their citizens, consideration of individual rights can be pushed aside. The New Order's support for female international labour migration stood in marked contrast to the broad thrust of its policies for women that emphasized their status as citizens primarily in terms of their domestic roles as wives and mothers.

Feminist theory has moved toward opening up the 'understanding of women's experience and politics to the plurality of women and their embededness not only in gender relations but also in significant relations such as colonialism, race and class' (Stasiulis and Yuval-Davis 1995: 28). The phenomenon of women migrating globally as low-paid workers, brings these overlapping relations into clear focus. The 'central gender issue in contemporary capitalism is the position of homeworkers [domestic servants] and outworkers. Caught between the private sphere of gendering and the international space of capitalism, they have no access to the protection offered by the state public sphere' (Spivak quoted in Connolly 1993: 106). State protection of women has been a focus of women's activism in Indonesia since the early twentieth century. As noted in Chapter 2, these demands have centred on protection of women's rights in marriage and divorce, but protection of women workers has been another concern, and it has been enacted in the 1948 labour legislation. In the contemporary globalized labour market, as women move more into formal employment, recent political campaigns have demanded further state protection of women workers, particularly as overseas labour migrants. Women in manufacturing, female labour migrants, and activism for their rights are addressed in the remainder of this chapter.

## The new gender regime in manufacturing

Rather than adopting the strategy followed in the 1980s by many developing countries of sequestering foreign capital in special economic zones removed from the cities where urban infrastructure and services were already overloaded, the government prohibited the location of additional factories in urban areas, directing them to rural areas, notably on Java. This was intended not only to reduce demographic pressure on the cities by keeping rural dwellers in place, but also to spread non-farm rural employment and thus to induct the broad mass of the population into a modern economy.[1] As noted above, national policy-makers who first encouraged the shift to light manufacturing saw it as a way of reducing unemployment and underemployment among males (the breadwinners according to state ideology), yet young women in their teens or twenties came to constitute the majority of this workforce, reversing the earlier tendency to favour male workers in formal sector employment.

The expansion of light manufacturing into the Third World beginning in the 1980s has generally been characterized by a feminized workforce, and companies aim to enhance profit through utilizing attributes of femininity. From the point of view of the companies opening factories in rural areas, weaknesses in infrastructure were outweighed by the cheaper cost of land and labour, especially young female labour. Not needing to migrate to seek employment, these women could turn to their families in the village for food and housing. Indeed, this 'subsidization' of formal sector employment by the informal sector activities of other family members was necessary, because the low wages paid to these women do not cover their full living costs (Wolf 1992: 216). While this kind of industrial development occurred first in Java, the same principles have applied to developments elsewhere. Women industrial workers in South Sulawesi who migrated from neighbouring Maros district into the Makassar industrial zone were dependent on support from their families in rural areas to subsidize their living in the city (Silvey 2000a: 148). It has also been common for migrant workers to be housed in company dormitories, where company officials can regulate personal behaviour (for example through night curfews), and where they can be called at short notice to take extra shifts.

Wolf found that women factory workers tended to come from poorer, especially landless, families, where family income derived from a variety of sources, and this has been confirmed in later studies (Hutagulung *et al*. 1994: 151). Even when women workers live at home, their paid employment signals changes in the gender and generational dynamics of households. The young women's income provides a steady cash flow enabling the purchase of consumer commodities, the payment of school fees for younger children and so on. It also relieves the family of the burden of paying for the upkeep of the young women. Although there is little surplus from the wage, most young women belong to an *arisan* or rotating savings association, where each member contributes a set amount each month and members take turns to win the jackpot and receive all the contributed funds. This gives them access to a lump sum of capital funded from their wages at least once a year. Wolf (2000: 96) commented that this is the most significant outcome of employment, as it allows them to accrue prestige as well as help out in family crises.[2]

The current generation of young women industrial workers tends to be high-school graduates (Warouw 2004). Young women factory workers whose tasks include sewing and soldering are 'unskilled' labour; however, Elson and Pearson (1981) noted that young women's prior socialization which includes learning skills such as sewing and weaving provides them with necessary skills, and hence they achieve high levels of productivity more quickly than male workers. Far from being a natural attribute, their apparent higher productivity can also be attributed to the organization of work; they are required to meet production targets, and the low pay requires them to work overtime to make ends meet (Tjandraningsih 2000: 262).

Second-wave feminism emphasized the entry of women into paid employment as a crucial feminist strategy to upset the 'public–private' divide;

however, this entry of women into manufacturing employment cannot be seen as an unequivocal harbinger of gender equity. Typically in Indonesia, in spite of the legislated requirement for equal pay for equal work (Manpower Law No. 25/1997), women earn only 60–70 per cent of the wages earned by men for comparable work.[3] In the hinterland of Jakarta, women may earn as little as half of what men do. Private companies and state enterprises avoid the legal requirement for equal pay by strategies, such as concentrating women in lower-paying sections of the enterprise, or using piece work rates (see Grijns *et al.* 1994). The studies of women workers report that they are not only paid lower wages than men, but they are not paid legislated minimum wages (ibid.). Although Indonesian labour laws have special provisions for women workers, including two days' paid menstruation leave, paid maternity leave and breast-feeding breaks, these are inevitably avoided, often by the ruse of employing women as daily-status rather than permanent employees, or by utilizing their labour as out-workers (see Sayogyo and Wahyuni 1994: 57). It is common for women to be dismissed when it is discovered that they are pregnant (Hutagulung *et al.* 1994: 158).

From the companies' point of view, young women are preferred not only because they are cheaper, but also because they are assumed to be more docile. Employers draw on the culturally valorized feminine personality traits of *malu* (shy, embarrassed) and *takut* (fearful, respectful) as management tools (Mather 1983: 13, 15). Familial hierarchies between the 'manager–father' and the 'workers–children' is a form of labour control (Wolf 2000). The hegemonic militarized masculinity is played out in this application of the family system: companies utilize former police or army staff who pride themselves on toughness as personnel managers (Wolf 1984: 220).

Some commentators have noted that compared with men, women workers are less likely to be unionized or go on strike, so they are less able to change conditions on the factory floor—long hours in cramped, dirty, poorly ventilated workplaces with inadequate access to water and food (Sayogyo and Wahyuni 1994; Hutagalung *et al*. 1994). Women experience health problems due to such conditions. There is also a lack of opportunity for workers to develop skills that could lead to other career opportunities. Men hold most supervisory positions, even where the workforce is female (Hutagalung *et al*. 1994: 171). There are frequent reports of sexual harassment (Tjandraningsih 2002). However, in the latter years of the New Order, many strikes were reported in factories and women were prominent as labour activists (Warouw 2004). Smyth and Grijns (1997) questioned if the passivity described by Mather in the 1980s could still be assumed. The repressive restrictions on labour unions and the right to strike mitigated against workers protest, but in the latter years of the New Order, labour NGOs came to play an important role in defending workers' rights (Smyth and Grijns 1997: 15). Organizations representing women workers were actively involved in protests against the provisions of draft labour legislation presented to parliament in 1997. Of particular concern were proposals to eradicate the special privileges of women workers, as well as perceived limitations of the right to strike. Although women's presumed passivity is one of the traits fitting them to

industrial work, it cannot be assumed that this is a natural attribute, or that it is not susceptible to change once rural women begin living different sorts of lives as industrial workers. In the 1990s, there were also many spontaneous protests and individual acts of resistance (see Warouw 2004).

What motivates these young women to seek industrial employment? In spite of the low level of wages, as noted above, these jobs can provide a much-needed regular source of income to households where the majority of members work in the informal sector and whose sources of cash are irregular. The New Order commitment to the expansion of public education has also had a significant impact on employment expectations. Young women in rural areas of Sulawesi found themselves 'unemployed and underemployed' as their education made them overqualified for farm work (Silvey 2000b). In addition, as noted above, agrarian change has reduced employment opportunities in agriculture. The necessary daily travel for post-primary education also makes rural youth less experienced than previous generations in farm work, as they are less likely to have regularly assisted in the family farm. This also habituates them to travel outside of the family domain, a prelude to the decision to migrate for work (see Silvey 2000b; Warouw 2004).

The women interviewed by Wolf felt privileged to have factory jobs. They had a feeling of independence and enjoyed being able to purchase their own clothes and cosmetics. As noted above, through savings associations (*arisan*), some of the workers are able to turn their regular wage into a sum of disposable capital, although such winnings were more often used to pay off personal debts or buy goods for the women's parents back in the village than to make a bank deposit or invest in income-yielding property (Wolf 1992: 188–9). The young factory workers in Java rejected agricultural and informal sector employment as they knew it would return them to work in villages 'where they would be controlled more by parents or other villagers, would have to work longer, and would earn much less' than in the factory (Wolf 1992: 255–6). Young Bugis women who migrated to Makassar, the provincial capital of South Sulawesi, to seek work in the industrial zone, expressed a desire to leave parents and *mandiri* (stand on their own two feet; be independent). Their moving beyond the protection of male relatives is a dramatic shift in gender norms: some even migrate against their parent's wishes. However, Silvey points to the irony of the young women seeking to escape control by working. In the factories, they experience high levels of surveillance. 'Factory workers are constantly watched by shopfloor managers who keep them from speaking to one another, from walking around the factory, and from going to the toilet at any point other than the designated break time.' (Silvey 2000a: 150). Similar high levels of surveillance and punishing work schedules have been described in factories in Java (Warouw 2004).

Both Wolf and Silvey found that young female factory workers from poor rural families felt they acquired freedom to make life choices—including choice of marriage partner. The hope of finding a husband is the second most stated reason for migration to the Makassar industrial area. Dating is common in the

zone: rural parents' knowledge of the more free relations between the sexes in the city and in the industrial estate raised fears of loss of control of their daughters' sexuality (Silvey 2000a). The women themselves were impacted by these concerns. Bugis women in Sulawesi often expressed their anxiety that working in the industrial zone posed a threat to their reputation (hence also family honour, and their marriageability). Young women are stigmatized by living in the industrial zone. Migrating on their own is a break with the past for them. Silvey (2000a) quotes one young woman worker who feared that people would assume she was a prostitute because she lived in the industrial zone. A similar anxiety was noted among young women workers on Batam Island, which has well-developed tourism and entertainment industries. Factory workers wear the *jilbab* (tight veil) in a public performance of 'good women' who feel *malu* (shame, embarrassment, propriety) that separates them from their less moral sisters (Lindquist 2004). In the Makassar industrial zone, the Javanese women who were a minority (18 per cent) of workers, did not express the same anxieties. However, assumptions about appropriate gender roles are challenged by their experience in the city. Silvey (2000a: 508) cites a young woman worker:

> After I came here [to the city], I saw a lot of women working, and so I was not ashamed (*malu*) to work here. Before I thought good women (*wanita yang punya harga diri*) did not work (*kerja*) but now I see many people—Buginese people, Makassarese people, Torajan people, Javanese people, women, men—working here.

Not all women were equally positioned to enter the paid workforce, however. Household dynamics impacted on choices: factory workers in Java were not only single but also from households with other adult female members who could continue with the domestic and farming tasks vacated by the young women workers (Wolf 1984). Silvey's research supports this common finding, that households with a high proportion of women members are more likely to have released a female migrant: the employment records of the Makassar factories confirm that the majority of the workers are between 15 and 28, not yet married and have no children (Silvey 2001). So factory work is also linked to a stage in the life cycle: once women are married they are more likely to seek different employment, for example in the informal sector that allows them to combine maternal responsibilities with work (see Indraswari 2006). Migrating to the city and seeking employment is also a lifestyle choice for the young women and marks a significant shift in household gender regimes in which young unmarried women (at least in South Sulawesi) were confined in the home.

The 1997 monetary crisis (*krisis moneter*) soon escalated into total economic crisis as the collapse of the rupiah ramified throughout the economy (the ironically named *kristal—krisis total*). Many of the factories that utilized the feminized labour force closed down, further limiting the employment possibilities for women. The work-creation projects funded by overseas donors

tended to be only for male workers (Darmadi 1998; Oey-Gardiner 1998: 88). In the situation of economic crisis, there was a real concern that women would be forced into even more exploitative forms of employment, such as in the sex industry.

Silvey (2001) reports on the conditions in the Makassar industrial zone in 1998 following the *krismon*. She found that 19 of the 44 factories that had been operating in 1995 had closed down. Sixty-three per cent of their employees had been women, and greater numbers of women than men had left the area. More women reported earning income from sex work. Because of higher levels of prostitution, all women in the zone felt greater pressure from the increased difficulty of representing themselves as chaste. The women who did not want to be sex workers left and those who remained expressed lowered aspirations for their urban existence: whereas before the crisis they commonly stated the desire for consumer goods as a reason for migration, after the crisis, their desires were more modest. Workers in the zone experienced declining living standards, with people eating less frequently and more likely to share accommodation with more people (Silvey 2001).[4] But by the early 2000s, Warouw (2004) reports an increased ability of post-crisis workers in West Java to purchase consumer goods, partly due to increased wage levels after Reformasi, and partly due to the appearance of cheaper Chinese-produced goods on the market.

Because the households that had released women for migration were likely to be those that could not absorb young female labour, these households had the most difficulty in re-absorbing returned migrants (Silvey 2001). There were higher expectations of young women's labour than young men's in the rural household, and many returned migrant women found themselves immersed in a heavy round of domestic tasks while their returned brothers remained idle. But at the same time, young women's health and nutrition were subordinated to that of their brothers. The young women found this difficult to accept graciously, according to Silvey, as their time in the industrial zone had 'denaturalized' the experience of men having privilege in the household. Silvey cites Chant's (1996) observation: while gender roles may be subject to change, gender relations are characterized by continuity (Silvey 2001: 9). The young women's experience as paid workers, especially those living away from their families, engaged them in the performance of new gender 'scripts' and it was difficult for them to slip back into the moral universe of the gender regime of the family home. As well as becoming new kinds of economic subjects, engaged in the wage economy, pursuing dreams of consumer purchases that enabled them to live a modern life, the young women also challenged norms of public gender behaviour: many of these transformed economic subjects engaged in political activism for worker's rights (see below).

## Domestic service/overseas labour migration[5]

Beginning in the early 1980s, Indonesia has had a rapidly growing deployment of overseas labour migrants, the majority of them women. The initial wave of

Indonesian labour migration was to the Middle East, where the oil price increase after 1973 led to a construction boom and industrial development. However, these capital-rich states lacked the labour demanded by the growth. Southeast Asian countries (notably Thailand and the Philippines) became sources of skilled and unskilled labour. It was not until 1983 that Indonesia established regulatory provisions known as AKAN (Angkatan Kerja Antar Negeri, or Labour Movement between Countries). The state intended to export male labour but by this time the construction boom was ending and there were few opportunities for male Indonesian workers. But the new-found prosperity had fuelled demands for domestic servants and by 1984, the majority of new Indonesian migrants to the Middle East were women working as housemaids. Their Islamic faith made them particularly acceptable as domestic workers in the Middle East. By the 1990s, increasing numbers were going to Malaysia, Hong Kong and Singapore (Hugo 1997). For the Indonesian government, this provided a way of realizing a 'comparative advantage' in the global economy, in the form of abundant cheap labour—a means of alleviating unemployment and increasing foreign earnings. The Fourth Five Year Plan (1984–9) set a target of 240,000 workers for overseas migration. It was estimated that this would yield over US$1 million in foreign exchange earnings in the period.

The number of migrant workers exceeded this target, which was doubled to half a million workers in the Fifth Five Year Plan (1989–94) (Hugo 1995). The importance of remittances to the GNP and future financial streams of labour-sending countries make labour migrants of interest to both governments and international lending agencies. Labour migration is important for the balance of payments position. Hence governments will continue to promote migration, 'no matter how much the labor markets they service exploit those workers' (Nonini 2002: 8). Official remittances through the banking system accounted for US$2 billion in 2001. Globally, in 2004, almost 80 per cent of international labour migrants were women, and around 95 per cent of them were in the informal sector (Asian Development Bank 2006: ch 6).

Domestic service is a significant informal sector occupation for Third World women, in particular rural women moving to the cities (see Boserup 1970), and has a long history in Indonesia. Regarded as 'unskilled' labour because it requires no formal training, women are deemed more suitable than men, because they have in fact had skills training as part of their female socialization. It has great potential for exploitation, happening inside the private world of the family, utilizing practices that mimic family household labour.[6] Indonesia has no laws regulating domestic service at home, and until 2006, few provisions for protecting workers overseas. Transnational labour migration is a risky business: migrants are frequently 'un-free' or 'questionably free' with employers or agents keeping their passports and restricting their movements. They are 'subject to extra-economic power ranging from physical violence and imprisonment, to verbal harassment and unobtrusive but acknowledged surveillance' (Nonini 2002: 14). Chin (1998) recounts that her interest in studying domestic servants in Malaysia was sparked by an incident when she heard a woman crying in a

neighbour's back yard: it was the Indonesian servant who had been chained up while the householder was absent through the day.

Already by 1984, the Indonesian press was reporting irregularities in the recruitment processes, with prospective workers being duped and badly treated by recruiting agencies. However, the biggest public outcry was in response to allegations of ill-treatment of the workers, including sexual abuse, by their Saudi employees (see Robinson 2000a). The government initially tried to deny these allegations, on the basis that the Islamic culture of Saudi Arabia implicitly provided protection for women. But when a prominent Islamic leader, Lukman Harun, reported ill-treatment and abuse of Indonesian workers following a 1984 visit to Saudi Arabia, the government could not ignore the subsequent noisy debate. Criticisms included the failure of recruiting agencies to register workers with the Indonesian diplomatic missions, exploitative working conditions, and unfair contracts. The allegations were supported by accounts from migrant workers that began appearing in the Indonesian press, detailing difficult working conditions, reneging on contracts, and sexual harassment. Zaenah was raped by a friend of her employer: 'I wanted to scream, but to what end? The house was empty, the neighbours far away. Who was I to ask help from?' (*Tempo* 2 June 1984). She became pregnant and was sent home, a story that is not uncommon. While the government argued that the Islamic culture of Saudi Arabia provided protection, apparently housemaids are outside the social sphere within which women are required to be protected: Muslim Indonesian servants were treated in the same manner as women from other non-Muslim countries who have also reported exploitation and abuse.

The peak body for the recruiting agencies at the time (IMSA—Indonesion Manpower Suppliers' Association) tried to blame unregulated migration, especially people who went on a pilgrim visa and overstayed. The Minister for Labour accused Lukman Harun of potentially damaging relations with Saudi Arabia. The Majelis Ulama, the quasi-official body charged with issuing *fatwa*, took up the issue and though they identified several relevant *syarat* (stipulations based on Islamic precepts), such as the requirement that women making the pilgrimage to Mecca must be accompanied by *muhrim* (non-marriageable close male kin), at that time they stopped short of a specific pronouncement, saying there was no hard evidence of abuse. The President ordered the Minister for Labour and IMSA to reach a compromise. They determined that supervision and protection had to be strengthened, by appointing additional labour attachés at Indonesian missions. This was proposed as sufficient to meet the need to protect women as stipulated in the Qur'an. Few were actually appointed, however, and the issue was revisited in the 2006 labour legislation. The government moved to tighten up the regulation of recruiting agencies, requiring them to have representatives in Saudi Arabia. Some licences were revoked in January 1986. The Minister also suggested that there should be more emphasis on sending women to Malaysia, where there was a shared Malay culture.

The shocking stories led several official women's organizations to call for prohibition of women migrating overseas. The Minister for Labour rejected this,

saying the women had a right to choose to work overseas. Activist women's groups supported him. Echoing the position commonly put by sex workers and their supporters, they argued for regulation, not prohibition, stressing the women's rights to work and to state protection. The debate is polarized on these lines until now, and it is at heart a debate about models of femininity: the protected, home-based woman versus the economically independent worker. The prohibition position has remained on the agenda, and has strong support from the restrictive Islamist discourses on women's social position circulating post-Reformasi.[7]

The government did not directly address the problem through legislation or through negotiating agreements with foreign governments about contracts and working conditions as had been done by the Philippines government. Rather, they invoked an argument that the women faced problems because they were uneducated and unskilled. Hence they resolved to only send skilled workers, such as nurses and office workers. However, there was no market for Indonesian workers in these categories. The next response was to train prospective domestic workers. There were reports that sometimes women were abused by employers because they inadvertently damaged household appliances that they did not know how to operate. Labour migrants were required to undergo compulsory training in skills such as sewing, child care and the proper use of household appliances and telephones, along with learning 200 Arabic words before departing for work abroad. (As in the Philippines, many skilled workers whose qualifications are not recognized choose to migrate as unskilled or low-skilled workers: hence Indonesian university graduates are also working abroad as housemaids.) In a typical New Order move, the training enabled the government to respond to critics by saying the women were now 'skilled', but there are questions about the effectiveness of the training. An independent evaluation in 1997 reported that the workers felt the training to be of limited utility, with little relation to their jobs. Much of it was in the form of lectures and instruction, with little hands-on training. A recent account of labour migration for domestic service within Asia notes the variability of the training provided by different recruiting agents: it might be only a few days, but some responsible agencies provide several months, training in a facility with a 'mock up' of a Hong Kong apartment (Anggraeni 2006). The amounts paid up-front to recruiters are increased to cover the 'training' and add to the costs recouped from the women's salaries, and they work for up to eight months without recompense to pay off recruitment and travel costs. The continued high levels of illegal migration can partly be explained by migrant workers attempting to avoid the high charges of recruiting agencies (Anggraeni 2006).

By the early 1990s, in a tacit admission that there were problems with the conditions of employment in Saudi Arabia, the destinations of migrants were diversified to include Singapore, Malaysia, Brunei and Hong Kong, and the volume continued to increase, especially in the post-1997 economic crisis (*krismon*). Initially, overseas migrant workers were mainly from Java, but through the 1990s places of origin became diversified with more women from

eastern Indonesia joining the flow. However, women from Java—particularly West Java—still predominate, especially among those going to the Middle East. Undocumented (illegal) migration is 'almost certainly greater in scale' than legal migration, especially to Malaysia (Hugo 2002: 159). Men probably outnumber women in this illegal migration, however. While poverty is a major 'push factor' as people see work overseas as a way of providing for their families and their dreams for the future, the rights activist, Taty Krisnawati, commented that Indonesia's poverty did not explain the exploitation. Rather: 'We live in times in which it is OK to buy and sell people (*manusia dijual belikan*)' (interview 1997).

It was assumed that Malaysia would be a safe destination because of shared culture and religion, but newspapers have continued to report abuse from all destinations (Anggraeni 2006). Many Indonesian maids have fallen to their death while cleaning windows in high-rise buildings in Singapore. Several Indonesian women have been charged with murdering employers or children in Singapore (Susilo 2004). Recent (2006) reports from Malaysia indicate that hundreds of women have been abused and are taking refuge at the Indonesian Embassy while they seek legal redress. The 2004 case of Nirmala Bonat, from West Timor, who was burnt and beaten by her female employer, caused shock in Indonesia and Malaysia. She recounted her story:

> I saw my friends coming back to the village from Malaysia and they brought lots of money with them. I wanted lots of money, so I had to come here. At first I was hit and later she poured hot water over me. After that she pressed an iron to my body and she beat me all over. I had been beaten on the head, and didn't want to get my hair wet because there was still a cut on my head. Then she got water and poured it over me (*Foreign Correspondent* 2006).

In a television interview, the Malaysian Minister for Home Affairs downplayed the problem. In particular he refuted the suggestion that maids, contracts should allow a weekly day off—guaranteed by the contracts of employment for Filipinas—arguing that they went out with their employers on Sunday, and that was their day off (*Foreign Correspondent* 2006). Conditions are best for migrant domestic workers in Hong Kong and Taiwan, where, unlike Saudi Arabia, Singapore and Malaysia, their rights as workers are covered by local law (Anggraeni 2006).

Anggraeni's (2006) sensitive account shows the range of experience, from abuse ending in death or injury to the maid or her abusive employer, to mutually satisfactory arrangements where women are able to educate their children through years of properly remunerated employment and the employers respect the important household maintenance work carried out by their servants, and provide decent conditions.

Clearly, transnational migration is not a purely economic phenomena, that is, a movement from areas of labour surplus to labour shortage: 'processes of

globalization play upon and rework multiple, territorially based regimes of power and knowledge in which individuals are implicated as members of certain classed, raced, gendered and ethnic populations' (Nonini 2002: 9). For example, state policies (in receiving countries) that differentiate between groups of workers produce racialized and nationalized hierarchies. In Malaysia the availability of cheap Indonesian domestic servants supports the development of a Malay middle class, who can emulate the high status lifestyle of the Chinese (who can afford the more expensive Filipinas), with whom they are in competition (Chin 1998). International labour migration thus serves the broad state agenda concerning the political balance between the main racial groups in Malaysia.

Local constructions of masculinity and femininity are important factors influencing migration patterns as well. Some provinces (like Southeast Sulawesi) with strong traditions of male out-migration have been slow to change to a pattern in which women workers migrate on their own.[8] The people of the eastern province of Nusa Tenggara Timur (NTT) (especially the island of Flores) on the contrary have eagerly embraced the new opportunities for women, although often they migrate to join family members overseas. In other places (like Lombok), the effects of predominantly male international labour migration have led to a situation where women are left behind to do men's work; many of the so-called *janda* Malaysia, or 'Malaysia widows' do not hear from their husbands for years on end.

In a further challenge to local gender regimes, many men in NTT have become 'househusbands', taking on domestic work as their wives leave for work overseas. A Flores man who I met doing the family laundry at a spring joked to me that he was performing *peran ganda* (dual role), picking up on the rhetoric that accompanied official sanctioning of women's entry into paid work in the 1980s. The women caring for the children of foreigners to support the education of their own children, left behind with fathers and other family members (see Hugo 2002; Angraenni 2006), radically challenge the New Order-sanctioned family gender regimes and are also at odds with the emergent Islamist discourses post-Reformasi that valorize protecting women in the home.

## Labour activism

The climate for industrial protest was difficult under Suharto's New Order. At this time, industrial relations were under tight government control, part of the putative 'family system'. Despite the guarantee of freedom of association in Article 28 of the 1945 Constitution, reaffirmed in Law No. 18/1956 and Law No. 14/1969, in 1973 all trade unions were brought together in one big union, FBSI (Federasi Buruh Seluruh Indonesia—All-Indonesia Labour Federation) with leadership appointed by the government. 'The New Order government regulated the existence of labour unions (only one labour union was officially recognized), stipulated the level of minimum wages, and influenced the general labour conditions' (SMERU 2003: 1). A chief cause of industrial disputes in Indonesia has been the failure of employers to pay legislated minimum wages.

The New Order also legitimated the use of the military in containing labour protests.[9]

In the face of blatant repression, and the use of sexualized violence to threaten women, activists sought 'democratic space' within which to act. Activist women seized on international instruments that had been ratified by the Indonesian government, in particular the 1980 Convention on Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), which Indonesia ratified in 1984 (Law No. 7/1984). Activists have also been able to point to clauses in the constitution that guarantee women's rights, and which are consistent with CEDAW. By tying their critique to CEDAW, and the Indonesian government's reporting responsibility, they were able to claim a legitimate stance to highlight the poor working conditions in factories (Robinson 1998a). However, this room to move has been limited. During Suharto's New Order, GBHN had a higher legal status than laws (Undang Undang), so these regulations were not meaningful (Katjasungkana 1999: 79). Indonesia reserved clause 29 of CEDAW, which allows appeal to the International Court of Justice.[10] Signing on to CEDAW gave rise to two directives from the Minister for Manpower (Menaker): Ministerial Decision (SK Menaker No. 5/1988) forbidding sacking women on conditions of marriage, pregnancy or birth, and Ministerial Decision (SK Menaker No. 5/1988) forbidding discrimination against women workers. The lawyer Nursyahbani Katjasungkana (1999) asks, what meaning does signing on to CEDAW have if the government had not ratified other human rights conventions, and if there is no freedom of association so that women workers cannot organize against long hours and low pay?

The vacuum of leadership at the shop floor due to the non-existence of independent unions was filled by labour rights NGOs. These groups spearheaded local protests and broader campaigns for worker's rights, especially from the early 1990s (Ford 2001). Nonetheless, the hegemonic gender ideology of the New Order permeated workers' consciousness. Based on comparative studies of women labour activists in Thailand and Indonesia, Reerink (2004) comments that whereas Thai women embraced the identity of worker, the Indonesian women labour activists that she interviewed identified first as women, and saw their interests as workers tied to the expression of *kodrat*—issues such as maternity and menstruation leave, safe transport at night. However, reflecting also the 'rational' extension of women's domestic responsibilities into the economy, the women also deemed important the provision of a decent wage that enables them to feed their families. The domestic concerns of women did not automatically render them passive because they will fight on these workplace issues (see also Silvey 2003).

While men dominate the leadership and concerns of both trade unions and workers' organizations, there have been several important female figures as well. For example, Dita Sari was imprisoned by the New Order government in 1995 for organizing an illegal union and leading a strike of workers in a sports shoe factory. The women were demanding better wages and maternity leave. Since her release by the Habibie government in 1999, she has once again become a prominent political figure as president of the left-wing Indonesian People's

Democratic Party (PRD), and a leader of the left-wing union, the Indonesian National Front for Workers' Struggle (FNPBI). Another significant woman activist of the New Order period was a young woman factory worker and labour activist from Surabaya by the name of Marsinah. In 1993, Marsinah was found raped, tortured and murdered in the middle of an industrial dispute at her factory. Her killers have never been arrested (Waters 1993). Her bravery in struggling for workers' rights and the violent nature of her passing, regarded as an act of political intimidation by the military, made her an important public symbol of the repressive character of the New Order. Ratna Sarumpaet—a prominent poet and political activist—has written a play entitled 'Marsinah: a Song from the Underworld' which deals with her life and death. Hatley notes 'the way Marsinah was treated, her raped and mutilated body simply discarded in a forest, to Ratna symbolised the deep, trivialising contempt which men, especially powerful men, feel towards women who dare to speak out' (Hatley 1998: 8; see also Sarumpaet 1998). While the military use of sexualized violence was intended to terrorize women workers and discourage protest, Marsinah's murder sparked activism, and labour NGOs effectively used her as a rallying symbol (Silvey and Elmhirst 2003).

The 1990s witnessed the rise of activism by NGOs championing the rights of workers and international labour migrants and promoting public debate about their exploitation and abuse by labour recruiters, state officials and employers. In 1990, a group of human rights and feminist activists established Solidaritas Perempuan (SP), which they gloss in English as Women's Solidarity for Human Rights, to promote the interests of women migrant workers. International political alliances were significant in the genesis of this organization, which has provided a critical anti-abolitionist stance. The human rights activist Tati Krisnawati attended a seminar on trafficking in women in Korea, where she became aware of the problems for migrant workers, and specifically 12 cases of ill-treatment of Indonesian workers that had not been resolved. She and other activists formed SP as an umbrella organization with the goal of supporting individual workers, increasing public awareness, and influencing the government to improve the regulation of the export of labour (Triwijarti 1996; interview with SP activists June 1997).

In the late 1990s, in response to calls for prohibition of overseas labour migration by women, SP pronounced: 'they want to stop, we want to regulate as the women have the right to work and that must be defended. Even those women who have had bad experiences sometimes want to go back [to the Middle East]' (interview with SP activists 1997). At that time, SP held awareness-raising workshops in rural Java. They asked women and families to recount their experiences: women spoke of abuse in the training compounds even before they departed overseas. SP publicized cases of ill-treatment, which include deaths and disappearances, and called on the government to more effectively regulate the labour contracting companies. Abuse, violence and cheating are aspects of governmentality inherent in the global labour regime, producing 'docile, if always cautious and resentful' workers which transforms them into 'governable subjects as well as labouring ones' (Nonini 2002: 15).

Once housemaids are alone in the house of the employer, they are isolated and powerless. Many do not know how to use the telephone and/or to telephone the Indonesian diplomatic mission. In 1996, SP waged a campaign to expose the unexplained deaths of migrant workers, documenting about 30 cases in which relatives had difficulty in establishing the circumstances of their death. In some cases, SP arranged for autopsies. Most of the deaths were due to violence—torture, sexual abuse, unsafe working conditions and travel. The acknowledged deaths were only the tip of the iceberg, as many women have just disappeared, lost to contact. In 2004, the case of two young women who were kidnapped with their employers in Iraq revealed that many of the workers travel on false passports, as the labour hire companies save costs by 'recycling' documents.[11] In one poignant story, a father described how his daughter's corpse had been sent back from the Middle East. He was told that she had committed suicide but the circumstances surrounding her death were never made clear. While he and his wife accepted it as fate (*takdir*), they wanted to know what had happened. He had sent his daughter in order to improve the lives of his family and now they still had the debt to the moneylender of Rp 600,000 (Sri Sunarti Purwaningsih 1998, pers. comm.). In cases where the worker has died, her poor rural family often has a debt to the labour recruiter or the moneylender. In another case reported by SP, a family was told that their deceased daughter 'had run into a camel' (SP activist, 1997, pers. comm.). Women who have been raped are often sent home because they are pregnant. However, according to SP, the women and their families are often unwilling to open up the cases because of shame. If their daughters are pregnant as a consequence of rape, they might say 'they liked each other': they feel *keberatan* (burdened) if the daughters have been raped and/or if the deaths are disclosed for public scrutiny.

SP has provided support for the grievances of individual workers, in concert with the Legal Aid Institute (Lembaga Bantuan Hukum—LBH) and collected a substantial amount of information on individual women migrant workers (*pekerja migran perempuan*). They prefer this term to the acronym TKW (*tenaga kerja wanita*) used in official discourse, because they consider that the latter term has become synonymous with housemaids, when women migrant workers are also in other occupations. Indeed I have found in many parts of Indonesia that this is the case: when you ask about TKW, even in areas that have out-migrating women, if they do not migrate to become housemaids, people will tell you 'there are no TKW here'.

Prior to Reformasi, labour agencies were not held responsible for adverse outcomes for the women they recruited. They were only monitored to ensure their compliance with regulations, not assessed on their overall performance. In 1997, one agent lost his licence because of a well-publicized case of trafficking a woman for sex, also involving the sale of a baby. SP have argued that the Indonesian government should take action against the domestic labour supply companies who are linked to the causes of death, or who are involved in the cover-up. They appealed for more government and public assistance to the

victims and their families. The difficulty families have had in establishing the circumstances surrounding the deaths led SP to accuse the government of being more concerned with their international relations with the countries concerned, which included Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei, Hong Kong and Saudi Arabia (Robinson 2000a).

IMSA has now gone, with DEPNAKER (the government Department of Manpower) taking a more direct role in the process, although the government regulations (before 2004) still left the primary responsibility for both recruitment and wellbeing of labour migrants to the labour hire companies or PJTKI (Perusahaan Jasa Tenaga Kerja Indonesia). The labour hire companies (until 2004) were obliged to use local recruiters in villages, who are often the village headman and his wife, the people who are also charged with overseeing migrant workers' welfare (see cases in Anggraeni 2006). NGOs supporting migrant workers have recorded cases of abuse by the DEPNAKER officials who regulate the flow. For example, all labour migrants must pay a set amount on their return for transport back to their village, regardless of how near or far, reflecting an assumption that they are stupid and cannot manage to find their own way home. In reality this has become an excuse for graft, and the fact that returning migrants pass through a special terminal at the airport, segregated from the mass of travellers, makes this harder to police.

Women's labour as domestic servants is at the confluence of competing gender discourses. While women's citizenship in New Order Indonesia was defended in terms of their family role, their female gender and familial socialization also fitted them for the occupational niche of housemaids in the Middle East and East Asia. In 2000, the emerging gender discourse within Islamist politics and the representation of hard-line groups such as Hizbut Tahrir on the MUI led to that body responding to the long-standing demand to declare a *fatwa* on labour migration by women. It determined that women's migration is prohibited because it involves them leaving their families for another city or nation without the protection of their *muhrim*. In 2005, the parliament stated that it would operationalize the *fatwa* in regulations, yet it has not enacted a ban, although the government has issued more prescriptive regulations concerning labour hire companies and the way they deal with labour migrants.

On the international market, Indonesian women are cheap labour and their practice of commodified labour in family homes leaves them at risk of sexual harassment. Spivak reminds us that 'the globalising of women's ability to sell their labour is not an overcoming of the gendered body' (Spivak 1992: 113). Their habitus provides them with a 'different commonsense understanding of the world' including 'what is "natural" or even imaginable, which is at variance with the commonsense understanding to the world in which they find themselves' (Bottomley 1992: 122). One Minister for Labour advised women against smiling at their employers in Saudi Arabia, lest this be misinterpreted as sexual invitation. They are 'other' and their status as migrant workers, especially workers in homes, puts them outside the protection of foreign states. It is only in Hong

Kong that foreign domestic workers have protection under local labour law (Anggraeni 2006).

## Fighting for women workers' special rights

As noted in Chapter 2, the first labour law of the new republic (Law No. 12 1948/1951), enacted by the left-wing women's rights campaigner S. K. Trimurti as Labour Minister, incorporated protection provisions for women workers including: a ban on night work between 6 p.m. and 6 a.m. and on women working in mining; limitations on work deemed to present moral danger; and women workers were awarded special leave for menstruation (two days per cycle), paid maternity leave and the right to breast-feeding breaks (see Elliott 1994). The Indonesian legislation reflected the concerns of the global movement for worker protection that reached its heyday in the years after World War I. It arose from critiques of the negative consequences for workers of laissez-faire capitalism, and concerns that the working hours and conditions of the new kinds of industries would shatter family life and working-class morals due to the high demand for the labour of women and children. The associated problems of high infant mortality and low birth rates gave rise to protective maternalism, related to the dominant line of thinking that defined women's citizenship in terms of maternal duties (Kessler-Harris *et al*. 1995: 6). The debate also reflected new strands of liberalism (opposed to the laissez-faire position) that demanded that the state intervene to protect the rights of individuals (see Lahiri-Dutt and Robinson 2008).

Paid maternity leave is the most enduring and widespread legacy of this movement, now enforced in some form in over 120 countries. Maternity leave is intended to combine the emphasis on a woman's motherhood and related roles with productive roles in the workplace, ensuring that childbearing capacity does not become a source of discrimination in the labour market. Breast-feeding and menstrual leave are less common: menstrual leave is only enacted in law in a number of Asian countries, including Indonesia (Lahiri-Dutt and Robinson 2008).

As women moved increasingly into the formal economy, the gender-specific provisions of the labour legislation became controversial. The critiques of protection clauses in late twentieth-century Indonesia mirror the international debates from the late nineteenth century: that it potentially discriminates against women and can serve to exclude women from the (usually higher paid) areas of the workforce where men predominate. Writing in 1975, Suwarni Salyo (1975: 449) of the Komisi Nasional Kedudukan Wanita Indonesia (National Commission on the Position of Women) commented that these rights often resulted in employers excluding women from employment, or excluding married women from managerial positions.

By the early 1990s, different class interests emerged in regard to the protection clauses. IWAPI, the Association of Indonesian Businesswomen, argued that menstruation leave under the legislation was 'contradictory to the aims of

women's emancipation . . . [because] the large numbers of women who make use of this right only serve to lower the productivity of the companies in which they work and, as a result, many companies are reluctant to employ women' (Katjasungkana cited in Sen 1998a: 46). The middle-class women in white-collar employment no longer make use of this provision, so to them it is 'old-fashioned' and discriminatory. They also represent a management point of view, that such leave reduces productivity. Critics succeeded in having a proposal to repeal the clause put before parliament in 1992 but it did not succeed. At the time, Katjasungkana argued that the majority of blue-collar workers continued to make use of the provision, especially because of poor nutrition and health among working women (cited in Sen 1998a: 46). She further commented in 1994: 'Men's pay includes a supplementary family allowance but because workers' incomes are still low women also shoulder the burden of their family's needs. . . . Indonesian female workers . . . labour for wages that remain far below minimum needs for daily physical survival. So leave for menstruation and childbirth provides a protection that is very empowering for them. With menstruation leave, for instance, a female laborer is able to make a choice: whether to rest her body [for a day] and still be paid, or whether to keep working on double pay, because she would be working on a day on which she is entitled to paid leave. . . . [M]enstruation leave provides freedom and empowerment, which is what emancipation essentially means' (Katjasungkana [1994] 2003: 177–8). She rejects the argument of middle-class feminists that it is disempowering to enshrine difference, arguing for the specific interests of working-class women. In response to criticisms of the enshrining of gender differences in legislation, S.K. Trimurti, as an octogenarian champion of women's rights, spoke passionately at a Kartini Day celebration organized by a broad consortium of women's groups at Hotel Indonesia in 2001, reiterating the importance of these laws for women. The special legislation reflects a feminist sensibility of compensating for difference so women can be competitive with men in the labour market. In addition, trade unionists argue that organizing around specific issues such as menstruation leave can lead to women becoming involved in wider trade union issues.

An ILO booklet further noted that menstruation leave became an issue around which women were able to organize in a traditional Muslim setting (Olney *et al.* 2002). This view was confirmed by Siti Nursanita Nasution, a woman politician from the new Islamic party PKS (Partai Keadilan Sejahtera—Social Justice Party) who informed me that she had campaigned on the issue of menstrual leave in the 2004 elections. In her view, the Islamic prohibition of women's performance of religious obligations, in particular daily prayers and fasting while they were menstruating, indicated a concern for an increased risk to women's reproductive health at this time, and by implication, similar care for women's bodies should be exercised in the workplace through provision of menstruation leave (27 November 2005, pers. comm.).

Menstruation leave has had utility for the growing number of women factory employees whose work often includes compulsory overtime that can stretch the working day to 10 or 12 hours and may often involve either standing or some

other form of physical work. Women factory workers described by Warouw in the industrial region of Tangerang in West Java (2000–2001) struggled to survive on the minimum wage and relied not only on overtime, but also other allowances to support themselves. Women workers were paid less than men who are the presumed breadwinners (Decree of Minister for Labour No. SE.04/MEN/1988) and did not receive the allowances awarded to men, for example for housing or health care. Women who opted to work during the mandated two days of menstruation leave could claim an extra allowance. In the example provided by Warouw (2004: 233), a woman worker received Rp 8000 menstruation allowance to complement her base wage of Rp 426,500 and overtime of Rp 1,035,500. Electing to work during menstruation leave also gives women an increased opportunity to benefit from routinely worked overtime.

In April 1997 the Minister for Labour announced his intention to revise the labour laws including the protection clauses. He tabled draft labour legislation in the parliament, intended to be umbrella legislation for the 14 labour regulations passed between 1887 and 1969 (*Jakarta Post* 5 March 1997). The draft laws were the subject of protest, including several demonstrations outside the parliament building. Labour organizations objected to the limitations on the right to strike. There was criticism of the proposed removal of provisions concerning rights of women workers, including the right to menstruation leave. A group protesting outside parliament (DPR) on 8 April 1997 requested that the labour law give protection to women workers overseas who have been raped and sexually abused, and who work unregulated hours (up to 15–20 hours per day) (*Republika* 10 April 1997). These protests were spearheaded by a number of women's groups, including Solidaritas Perempuan. Some middle-class women, on the other hand, again requested that the protection provisions, especially menstruation leave, should rescinded as they felt they were discriminatory and impacted on employers' willingness to employ women. However, when it was passed, the law (Law No. 5/1997) reaffirmed protection clauses, including the ban on women's night work (with the explanation that this is the time for women to spend with their families) and on working underground. No action was taken on behalf of overseas workers.

Up to the crisis in 1997, the most common labour disputes concerned the failure of employers to pay legislated minimum wages and to recognize legislated rights, including menstruation and maternity leave, and breast-feeding breaks. The minimum wage has been in practice the maximum wage, and women often work for wages below subsistence levels. An overriding spirit of Reformasi has been a desire to promote the Rule of Law (Negara Hukum) as a reaction to the patrimonial and patriarchal character of the New Order. The field of labour relations has been no exception.

In 1998, the Habibie government ratified the 1948 ILO Convention on Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize and Abdurrahman Wahid's government made a further important change with Law No. 21/2000, which permitted workers to establish unions at the enterprise level, and

there has been an efflorescence of enterprise unions since then (SMERU 2003). There has also been steady growth in independent labour unions and federations (Ford 2005: 21–2). However, progress towards equality for women in employment and in trade union leadership has been slow, and issues of concern to women have been side-lined (Gardner 2005). The assumption of the male breadwinner is still strong. Infringements of regulations have rarely been investigated, and failure to receive menstrual leave entitlements has continued as one of the common reasons for industrial disputes in the post-Suharto period. The new generation of labour unions has not taken up the cause of overseas workers, where NGOs remain the main actors (Ford 2005).

In the post-Suharto era, while wage levels have increased significantly, the cost of living has also risen so that workers need to work compulsory overtime and fight for all allowances in order to achieve a living wage. Women's wages are reported in 2005 to be on average only 68 per cent of men's, and women tend to be in less secure employment—casual and piece work (ibid.)

The Megawati government initiated further reform of labour law in 2003. The new law brought together much of the basic regulation of the labour force, replacing or overriding many existing laws and regulations. In the public debate surrounding the new law, unions supported the continued provision of menstrual leave in spite of the criticism that it could contribute to discrimination against women in the workforce. The labour activist Dita Sari commented that it was necessary to support the protection provisions because it was not sensible to give up a right that had already been won.[12]

Law No. 13/2003 retained clauses providing special protection for women, in spite of renewed demands from different interest groups to exclude them. Article 76 retains restrictions on night work for pregnant women, and an obligation on employers to provide transport, food and drink and a decent and safe workplace for women engaged in night work. In the original provision in the 1948 Indonesian labour law, employers were obliged to provide a paid two-day leave. In the 2003 law, Article 81(1) states that 'Female workers/laborers who feel pain during their menstruation period and notify the entrepreneur are not obliged to come to work on the first and second day of menstruation.' Article 81(2) states 'The implementation of what is stipulated under subsection (1) shall be regulated in work agreements, the company regulations or collective labour agreements.' Under the 2003 law, the precise form of entitlement to menstrual leave is subject to negotiation between the employers and the enterprise union in businesses with more than 100 employees, and unlike maternity leave, payment is not obligatory (Article 84). It is now commonly reported that employees are required to undergo a medical examination to prove that they are indeed menstruating. The changes in the 2003 law open up space for contestation about this right.

A number of studies of work conditions have noted the poor enforcement of protection legislation. Eva Komandjaja (2004) (from the women's organization Yayasan Jurnal Perempuan) stated:

> most companies are also lax about granting time off for menstruating workers. According to Law No. 13/2003, a company is required to grant two days of paid menstruation leave to all women workers each month. Of the 10 companies surveyed in Jakarta, Tangerang, Bandung and Solo, only one is abiding by the menstruation leave regulation appropriately. Seven other companies stated that they would grant the two days only if the worker actually felt too ill to work. However, in such cases, the woman must be examined by her supervisor before the leave is granted.

Some companies provided medication in the company clinic so the women could work on. In most cases, employers provided monetary compensation for workers choosing to attend on leave days, and a representative of one company stated that only 5 per cent of women workers took the leave, the rest preferring the bonus. One company defended the practice of checking the women claiming the leave, because in many cases women abused the right and took leave near the weekend (Komandjaja 2004). The NGO Clean Clothes Campaign (CCC) activists Keady and Kretzu (2003) reported that in Nike's subcontracted factories the company has instituted procedures in which a woman must speak to her line-chief, and visit the factory clinic in order to show blood to the clinic staff to prove that she is menstruating. The factories discourage women taking the leave in order to keep the assembly line fully staffed. Women feel they attract the hostility of supervisors if they take leave. The toilets are inadequate—in number and standard—to enable women to appropriately manage the days that they are bleeding. Workers commonly had to queue in their two allotted toilet breaks per day, and toilets often were broken or had no water. The procedure can be intimidating and humiliating, so it has been found that many women choose to forgo their right to this leave (Blecher 2004: 483).

A 2004 workplace survey by the Jurnal Perempuan Foundation described similar problems for women workers claiming legislated rights to maternity leave, with women receiving only two months' leave and a compensation payment for the third month, or companies annulling the contracts of non-permanent employees when they are pregnant (Komandjaja 2004). However, there have been instances in which women workers have successfully achieved gains in local agreements under the new law, including work-based child care, safe transport after night shifts, family health benefits for women workers, and menstruation leave without a doctor's certificate (Gardner 2003).

The freer political climate of Reformasi led to increased public protest about the lack of protection of women workers overseas. In October 1998, a group of women who had borne children after being raped by Saudi employers demonstrated outside a Jakarta labour supply company, demanding that the company and the government fulfil undertakings given to support them and their children. On International Women's Day in March 1999, returned women migrant workers occupied the office of the Minister for Women's Affairs, demanding better government protection for overseas workers. The brutal rape of ethnic Chinese women on 12 and 13 May 1998 galvanized women's and human rights groups

throughout the country, and had the effect of establishing violence against women as a critical element of the new public discourse. The DEPNAKER position moved from a denial of any problems to acknowledging that the women were not adequately protected and that abuse occurred (DEPNAKER official 1999, pers. comm.).

In April 2000, an Indonesian maid named Kartini was sentenced to death by stoning in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), because she had become pregnant to a fellow worker—an Indian citizen who had since fled the country. This case led to an outcry in the Indonesian press and amongst women's groups, who were appalled at the harsh penalty and the poor legal process: for example, she was not provided with a translator, and the Indonesian Embassy was not officially informed, only learning of her case through the local press. Women demonstrated outside the UAE embassy in Jakarta, action that would not have been tolerated under the New Order. Both the Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Minister for the Empowerment of Women made representations to the UAE government concerning the fate of Kartini, who was released and returned home. This clearly marked a shift in the government position. The New Order government had been more concerned at managing foreign relations with Arab countries than with defending the rights of their citizens.

Since 1999, at least 117 Indonesian domestic workers have died in workplace accidents, mostly falling from a height while cleaning windows or hanging out laundry (Anggraeni 2006: 110). Several high-profile murder cases in Singapore have focused attention on abuse, and led to criticism of the government for failing to support women who are facing the death penalty for murdering their employers or the children in their care (see Anggraeni 2006: 72). Two women—Juminem and Siti Aminah—were sentenced to prison, the judge declining to impose the death penalty in recognition that the women were suffering reactive depression due to the treatment they had suffered from employers (Channel News Asia 6 September 2005).

Anggraeni comments that domestic service is not seen as real work and hence has not received protection and regulation from the government. As noted above, trade unions have also been reluctant to take up the issue. NGOs in Singapore, Malaysia and Hong Kong are providing legal advice and welfare support, and this is best organized in Hong Kong, where organizations for Indonesian workers (including Islamic groups) work together with groups established to support Filipina migrant workers (Anggraeni 2006: 62–3). Law No. 39/2004 on the placement and protection of Indonesian workers emphasized protection rather than migrant rights (Ford 2005: 11). The need for the government to appoint labour attachés at foreign missions (as has been done by the Philippines government, and which was suggested by Lukman Harun in the 1980s) was vociferously addressed in the parliamentary committee discussing the legislation (Machrusah 2006, pers. comm.), but attachés have only been appointed to Hong Kong and Singapore.

New coalitions of Indonesian NGOs have formed to provide legal assistance and support for overseas domestic workers, for example, KOPBUMI, the

Consortium for Indonesian Migrant Workers' Advocacy (Konsorsium Pembela Buruh Migran Indonesia), and GPPBM, the Women's Movement for the Protection of Migrant Workers. While the former represents the NGOs long active on this issue (like SP), the latter also includes religious groups such as Fatayat NU and MNU, and Wanita Katolik RI (Catholic Women). In 2003 these groups collaborated on a submission to the United Nation's Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Migrants. In response to public concerns, the government passed Law No. 39/2004 on the placement and protection of Indonesian workers overseas. While addressing some of the abuses related to recruitment (for example allowing women to be directly recruited without intermediaries), it failed to set minimum wages or conditions, including work hours and days off (Asian Development Bank 2006).

Currently (2008), activist groups are focusing on the issue of human trafficking, which has become a favoured international criminal activity rivalling drug and arms dealing. Numerous cases of young women being tricked into prostitution have come to light. Trafficked women are the most vulnerable in the labour market, and Solidaritas Perempuan has focused on this issue as their principal national campaign. This is taken up in Chapter 5.

## Conclusion

The labour market is an important site of gender relations, and the sexual division of labour is critical to the gender order and the state gender regime. Labour markets in Indonesia and the overseas labour markets they serve are not formed in purely economic terms but are 'culturally and politically produced by territorially and culturally specific . . . regimes of raced and gendered "knowledges" about workers by capitalist employers; regimes of nationalized and raced knowledge by state functionaries about migrants; regimes of gendered knowledge about women by men and husbands . . .' (Nonini 2002: 5).

Women's economic participation is a site of contradictions in the Indonesian gender order: while the symbolic dimensions of gender stress their domesticity, women stand out as international migrants working as housemaids while often their husbands take over their domestic roles, or as 'nimble-fingered' workers in the rapidly expanding light industrial sector. In the informal sector, they trade off exploitative conditions in order to attend to their domestic responsibilities while they earn income. Changing agricultural practices and increasing landlessness push them into the informal sector. Domestic servants work in the hidden space of the private home and their work conditions are unregulated.

While an increasingly visible group of middle-class women have a growing presence in decision-making positions in both public and private sectors, and high incomes in their own right, their impact on the gender order has been principally in the symbolic domain in their representation in mass media, although women policy-makers have championed some policy and legislative changes that pose challenges to the gendered exercise of power.

The gender regime of the New Order that emphasized a domesticated femininity has been brought into a global gender order that assigns women a particular place in the class relations of global capital. During the New Order, SP argued that a positive effect of international labour migration was that it provided the women with an opportunity to learn first hand about wealth differences. Under the restrictive political climate of the New Order people did not have the *ruangan* (space) in which to develop political awareness, but labour mobility provided opportunities to develop class consciousness.

Industrialization in Indonesia, and international labour migration of Indonesian women workers have led to a reshaping of local gender arrangements. Women's identities as workers remain highly inflected by ideas of domesticated femininity. But while the economic positions that women occupy in these new forms of work make them amongst the most exploited, new work practices and opportunities enable women to redefine forms of gender subordination, including in the households from which they may even be absent (Saptari 1995). The limited economic autonomy and freedom to move outside of social spaces regulated by familial relationships are contributing to new practices of femininity in Indonesia, in new sites of struggle over gendered forms of power.

# 5 Globalization of Culture-Sex and Sexuality

> Politics, broadly understood as the competition for power, generates new ways of constituting the subject and the social order within which humans dwell. Serious talk about sexuality is thus inevitably about the social order that it both reproduces and legitimates (Laqueur 1990: 11).

The sexualization of culture and reconstitution of sexuality that has occurred over the last four decades in Indonesia expresses the contradictions and tensions in the gender effects of New Order policies, and the contestations over gender and sexuality that have emerged post-Suharto. While Indonesian women of the current generation are increasingly likely to wear the *jilbab* (tight veil) as an expression of their Muslim identity, in recent years, Inul Daratista, a young entertainer from East Java, has become a national sensation, drawing crowds in the thousands to enjoy her raunchy stage performances of the rhythmic popular music known as Dangdut.[1] Her sensual hip grinding (*ngebor*) attracted censure from other male Dangdut performers. These contradictory expressions of the feminine indicate variety in gender performance, and the influences on the performance of gender by the competing cosmopolitanisms of Westernization and Islam. Contestations over national identity and national morality converged around the pole of female sexuality in political conflict over a 2006 draft bill outlawing pornography and 'pornographic action'. Inul's gyrations assumed iconic status for Islamic radicals supporting the bill and protesting the perceived Western-influenced degradation of national morality, a mood that has been growing since the 1990s. This concern is linked to the claims of masculine authority: the 2006 draft legislation coupled public concerns about the free availability of pornography with an attack on women's freedom to socially participate on equal terms with men, especially in clauses outlawing 'pornographic action' and imposing dress codes for women which purported to reflect Islamic moral norms (Chandrakirana 2006). The populist strategy by the newly empowered Islamic parties to link women's freedom to pornography was not successful, and the bill is currently as at (2008) stalled. Debates around the draft bill make claims for gender practices that subordinate women to men, place limitations on their freedoms as public actors and elevate masculine power over women. Men's

conduct and behaviour (for example, dress codes or hiring prostitutes) is not addressed in the legislation and men dominate the campaigns in support of the bill. In 2006, on Kartini Day (21 April), women paraded the streets of Jakarta in boisterous and colourful protest marches against the bill, proclaiming that Indonesian womanhood encompassed the 'beautiful and sexy'. Their public performance of a free and assertive femininity was countered several days later by an angrier, male-dominated protest in support of the bill.[2]

This chapter explores new forms of sexual identity and contemporary expressions of gender through changes in the arrangement of marriage, in youth sexuality and in representations of sexual behaviour in popular culture. It particularly focuses on changes in the social patterning of desire, or 'cathexis' which Connell describes as 'the construction of emotionally charged relations with "objects" (i.e., other people) in the real world' (1987: 112), a key aspect of the 'gender order'. Following Connell's analysis, this chapter assumes that the gender order is a 'historical composition' operating through institutions such as the state, the family and the workplace. The chapter also focuses on gendered body practices in the Indonesian archipelago, that is, on how women's bodies are constituted and lived in culture (Gatens 1996).

Ethnographic sources tell us that the concepts of the feminine and the masculine do not necessarily inhere in male and female bodies respectively. Ethnographers have described ways in which some island Southeast Asian cultures actively work to produce sexed adults (see Chapter 1). Under the New Order, there was a firming up of a kind of 'categoricalism' (Connell 1987), in which the social world was divided into two groups: male and female who interacted in the private sphere of the family, which is represented in the public world of politics by the household head (the man). As we saw in Chapter 3, the official discourse of the New Order explained women's social location in terms of *kodrat*, or biologically determined destiny. Mirroring the dualisms of seventeenth century European political thought, New Order ideology and state practice confined women to their 'naturalized' domestic domain, and denied them access to the public world of the 'body politic' by virtue of their biological capacity to bear and breast-feed children. *Kodrat* is a naturalizing ideology par excellence: while arguing for the natural roots of masculinity and femininity in sexed bodies, its elevation to a critical term in public discourse seems to date from 1993, when it was introduced into the guidelines of state policy (GBHN).[3]

The association of women with the household has historical echoes of the court practice of *pingitan* (caging) for pubescent girls until they married, a practice that Kartini railed against. What are the historical roots of secluding women in court cultures of the archipelago? Elite women such as Kartini were secluded, but not veiled. Watson-Andaya (2000: 233) argues that while Islam is associated with the gendering of space because of the Muslim value of sexual segregation to facilitate spiritual discipline, in island Southeast Asia, such Islamic ideas 'tapped deep cultural veins which had long drawn connections between "innerness" and being female'. Islam was first embraced in the

archipelago by local rulers and hence became linked to social stratification, and she argues that this concordance led to a strengthening of practices of secluding women (ibid.).

Koentjaraningrat (1975: 140) noted that although traditional shadow puppet performances (*wayang*) were held in the open air, and men, women and children mingled in the audience, when performances began to be held in the homes of the nobility male guests watched from the pavilion in front of the house 'and the white screen, which was placed over the wide doorway, could now conveniently be used as a divider between the front part and inner part of the house' with the ladies watching from the inside. Seclusion was linked to early marriage and fears of uncontrolled female sexuality: concerns with honour and discourses linking the status and dignity of families with their women's virtue are strong throughout the archipelago. Marriage is thus related to both family honour and to the control of female sexuality.

The elite pattern of secluding women in an 'inner' domain is in contrast to the oft-described active role of poor/non-elite women in agriculture and trade (Stoler 1977; Alexander 1987). Seclusion was not generally practised outside the court. However, a study of middle-class, urban women in the early 1970s reported that middle- and upper-class women did not work outside the home. This can be seen as a kind of 'conspicuous consumption' attesting to household affluence (Papanek 1979: 124), but can also be linked to the accommodation of 'State Ibuism' to conservative Javanese elite values (Djajadiningrat-Nieuwenhuis 1987). The wives of high-status men carried out home-based trading activities which expressed the heritage of women's active role in the economy (Papanek 1979: 124; Brenner 1998).

While apparently historically women did not have more stringent dress restrictions than men, male performance of modernity and national identity involves Western dress (trousers, jackets and collared shirts), while modern women's national dress draws on symbolic constructions of Javanese tradition. The New Order developed a 'uniform' or dress code to publicly represent '*ibuism*': on official occasions, women were required to wear national costume, consisting of a tightly wrapped *kain* (wrapped batik skirt), topped with a corset worn as a belt (*stagen*) and high-heeled slippers. The hair was tightly coiled and topped with an artificial hair piece in a fancy bun. This costume conferred immobility and incorporated a grotesque sexualization. It accentuated an artificial shape of pointy breasts under a tight (and semi-transparent) *kebaya*, and created an exaggerated bottom, from the tight wrapping of the skirt and the high heels, and heavy make-up was requisite. The scarf (*selendang*) in this mode was worn over the shoulder, not covering the head.[4]

Historical photos show women wearing the loose headscarf (*kerudung*), which was not the increasingly common *jilbab* and certainly not the face-covering *cadar* or *burka.* The *kerudung* was popularized by Muhammadiyah in Jogjakarta in the 1920s, and was regarded as a dress code enabling the secluded women from the Islamic neighbourhood (*kauman*) attached to the court to overcome the restrictions of *pingitan*. In many non-Muslim parts of the archipelago,

women were naked above the waist until recently (Bali and Nusa Tenggara Timur [NTT]), and in other places (such as Java), the native costume was a loosely wrapped sarong and a modification of the Chinese blouse (*kebaya*) that exposed the midriff (similar to the sari).[5]

During my initial fieldwork in the mining town of Soroako in the late 1970s, the complex multiracial and multicultural make-up of the mining town necessitated local women negotiating new forms of social spaces in their everyday housekeeping activities—such as shopping, washing and water collection from public standpipes—and embracing new kinds of activities. Expatriate women stood out in the village market: they observed different standards of dress and appropriate demeanour from local Muslim women, as some of the Indonesian immigrant women did—in particular Christian women from the neighbouring district of Tana Toraja. They were less concerned about the connection between modesty and dress and moved about more freely. Many had migrated on their own to seek work as household servants (Robinson 1991a).

By the late 1970s, many of the village women experimented with a modified form of Western dress, usually (long-sleeved) blouses and (below-the-knee) skirts. Many also cut their long hair. This was considered particularly appropriate dress for activities within the 'modern' sector: shopping at the company townsite, or meetings of the women's association established by company managers' wives. Men changed their sarongs for trousers in the modern sector. On formal occasions, the national dress described above became *de rigeur* (Robinson 1988).

In the mid-1980s, an interesting example of young village women breaking away from the embodied imperatives of femininity that had dominated their mother's lives, was the teenage girls' participation in the local volleyball competition, which they won against the more middle-class inhabitants of the company townsite. Participation in the competition necessitated them wearing short skirts in public, running and jumping on the court, showing physical prowess and fighting to win—a very different kind of demeanour from that hitherto the norm for young women in the public gaze. They were trained by a middle-aged village woman, who carried out her duties in a tracksuit. She had only begun 'experimenting' with Western-style dress less than 10 years previously.

The adoption of the *jilbab* by devout Muslims has, since the 1980s, been slowly replacing the *kerudung* or headscarf that had been more common before that date (Brenner 1996). The *jilbab* is an indicator of the growing influence of global Islam, an aspect of the opening of Indonesia to what Appadurai (1990: 296) calls 'global cultural flows' accompanying the internationalization of the economy. Such 'flows' have led to shifts not only in the manner of women's economic participation, but also in the modes of expression of femininity. However, as Appadurai's notion of 'scapes' implies, contemporary 'global interaction' cannot be equated with cultural homogenization: 'at least as rapidly as forces from various metropoles are brought into new societies they tend to become indigenised in one or other way' (Appadurai 1990: 295). The interactive process, of the global and the local, has been described by Tsing (2005) as

'global friction', manifesting a kind of 'stickiness' of contingent articulation. Simplistic models of inexorable homogenization by global forces can 'be exploited by nation states' in relation to their own citizens, 'by posing global commoditisation (or capitalism, or some other such external enemy) as more "real" than the threat of its own hegemonic strategies' (Appadurai 1990: 296). The militarized hegemonic masculinity of the New Order encompassed a form of emphasized femininity (Connell 1987, 2002) that drew on elite Javanese models of domesticated 'inner' femininity—the wife as the *pendamping suami* (companion to the husband) or *kanca wingking* ('friend behind'). While this has resonance with Western models of emphasized femininity associated with middle-class modernity (van Vucht Tijssen 1990), changes in expressions of the feminine perceived to challenge the gender order could be laid at the feet of Western influence. So, for example, claims for women's rights were dismissed as Western feminism and not associated with historical struggles by Indonesian women. Emerging global discourses have facilitated challenges to the homogenizing discourse of the New Order, for example, in the renewed influence of Islam and its role as an alternative cosmopolitanism to Westernization as well as in human rights discourse with its claims for the autonomy of embodied subjects, which has been associated with the public 'outing' of violence against women, perpetrated by the state and in the domestic sphere.

A general sexualization of culture has encompassed new ways of constituting subjects within the modernizing development programme of Indonesia's New Order. New expressions of gender transect the hegemonic model of femininity proposed by the New Order. There are changes in 'the social patterning of desire' (Connell 1987) in adult sexual relations. Women have become more able to make choices for themselves, as a consequence of expanded education; new economic roles provide a basis for independence; and the circulation of mass media images offer differing norms of female behaviour. At the same time, however, commercially driven circulation of sexual images and models of sexual attractiveness and the growth in commercial sex have created opportunities for exploitation of women. Innovative gender practices can be in tension with official images and norms of femininity and historical gender practices.

## Media images

Mass media (especially television and newspapers) were tightly controlled under the New Order. Until late in the Suharto period, television was state-owned and used by the government as an arm of propaganda. Many commentators have noted the manner in which television supported the repressive and restrictive images of women promoted through official ideology (Sunindyo 1993; Hatley 2002). Alternative representations of women crept in through *sinetron* (films made for TV) dealing with prostitutes—the storylines emphasize the tragedy of their lives, hence satisfying the censor, but the storylines allowed for the use of sexually attractive women and the display of their bodies to make sales (Sen 1998b). In the later years of the New Order, the ideological impulse of the regime collided with its economic agenda and the government capitulated to

pressure to allow commercial television licences (some of which were held by the children of Suharto). This opened the way for the screening of foreign commercial entertainment such as American soap operas and sitcoms, and extremely popular Bollywood films, and for the expansion in television advertising which had been banned on state-owned TV in the 1980s. Hence, a variety of performances of femininity and masculinity were playing out in Indonesian homes.[6] The government's interest in the propaganda uses of TV motivated the use of satellite technology to expand coverage throughout the whole archipelago, so television is now available in even remote corners. Rural residents have invested in satellite dishes in order to improve reception using migrant remittances or cash surpluses from global sales of agricultural commodities.

The New Order promoted conservative images of womanhood linked to domesticated maternal and wifely duty, but the topic of romantic love was common in popular discourse. Mass media images beamed stories of attraction, passion and attachment into houses nightly. The message being promoted supported the romantic lyrics of popular music.

## Free choice marriage[7]

Appadurai provides us with a view of a world in which cultural flows move in often incoherent and contradictory fashions and in which individuals rework the impetus to consumer agency so that it is felt as an individual agency. Notions of individual agency are especially powerful in the arena of gender identities and sexual relations. One of the most powerful discourses of modernity is that of the autonomous individual seeking personal fulfilment in their sexual relations (Giddens 1992). In contemporary Indonesia, forms of personal relationship are in flux, in particular those relating to issues of cathexis in adult sexual relations. Young people are questioning and refusing arranged marriage as the basis for family formation and as a cornerstone of personal life: there is growing demand to choose one's own marriage partners, and circulation of a discourse of romantic love as the basis of emotional attachment in adult relationships.

In Soroako, as in most parts of the archipelago, marriages were customarily arranged by the bride's and groom's parents, with an eye to the successful establishment of a new household. But this did not mean that passion and sexuality were considered unimportant in marriage. The eve of the wedding and the 'backstage' areas of the ritual where men and women were involved in the preparations for the main public events were marked by ribald joking and teasing about the future pleasures of marriage. In a related vein, some healers (*dukun*) did a steady trade in aphrodisiac potions and amulets which women sought to arouse a husband's sagging interest.

There was an assumption that the successful arranged marriage would bring sexual pleasure to both partners. The textual tradition of the archipelago gives us a glimpse into this construction of men and women as sexual beings. The Riau manuscript 'Himpunan Gunawan Bagi Laki–Laki dan Perempuan' 'Compendium of Charms for Men and Women' composed by a woman,

Khadijah Terong, in the early twentieth century, is a fine exemplar. The compendium deals principally with increasing sexual pleasure in marriage for men and women: charms to increase virility, delay ejaculation or to 'enhance the attraction of the female organs' (Mukherjee 1997: 37). It is part of a rich tradition of Islam-influenced texts on sexual pleasure, and combines Malay magic and the Sufi tradition: Khadijah writes that in satisfactory lovemaking 'you both shall see, experience and regard the wondrous riches of God' (ibid.). Idrus (2003) records similar Islam-influenced texts from South Sulawesi, with instructions for men and women on ways to increase their own and their partners' sexual pleasure.

Sharon Thompson's study of romantic love among American teenagers discovers that, '[s]ex, as it were is a sparking device, with romance as the quest for destiny' (cited in Giddens 1992). This is the precise inverse of the relation between romance and sex as expressed by older Soroakan people whose sensibilities had been formed before the changes associated with the establishment of the mine. In their view, finding a mate was understood in terms of meeting up with one's *jodoh*, or predestined marriage partner. Destiny, or rather a kind of pre-destination, decided one's path to romance. It was assumed that sexual pleasure would follow marriage, not that sexual desire was a sufficient basis for marriage.[8] Indeed, in many parts of the archipelago, arranged child marriage was seen as a way of avoiding the possibility that the potentially dangerous sexuality of adolescence would lead young women into bad marriages (Blackburn and Bessell 1997).

In a community where marriage used to be a family affair, the arrangement of a marriage by two families taking careful account of the need to establish a harmonious and economically viable household, the young are now in the grip of a desire for free choice marriage based on romantic love. The notions of romantic love being promoted in popular culture, such as pop songs, rest on this model of sex as a sparking device, exemplified in the Dangdut song 'Pertemuan Pertama' ('First Meeting'), in which the first glimpse of the beloved 'sparks' the passionate attachment.

The young people of Soroako are able to exercise their choice of marriage partner because the old no longer control the resources necessary to conclude a marriage, due to the shift from the agricultural to the wage economy.[9] Male wage earners are the most desired spouses, which represents a shift in the elements of cathexis in gender construction. This may be read as an advance in personal autonomy in that it frees the sexuality of young men and women from kinship-based forms of power and control. But the move to marriage choice based on romantic love can be also understood as a form of self-subjugation, an enslavement to the values of the consumer marketplace, reflecting a model of sexualized femininity, which is promoted in magazines, on television and in film. The modern idiom of romantic love is engaged with through commodified modes of communication (pop music CDs and television soap operas) and is related to the consumption of commodities associated with the manufacture of

sexual desirability. For example, one of the aspects of the mining company's presence in Soroako in the 1970s that people appreciated was the ability to embrace modern consumer capitalism, and one of the most common purchases was the cassette player. Dangdut songs were among the most popular, and could be heard daily, blaring out a particular construction of romantic love, based on a kind of slavery, in which the slave is under the master's arbitrary control. The lyrics represent the power of an abject form of love, characterized by pain and suffering. 'I hate you, but I miss you' was the refrain of the songs most popular at the time of my initial fieldwork in 1977–1979 and it was still being played in 1996 on a return visit.

The shifting practices with regard to emotional attachment, which valorize individual desire as a 'spark', are not without risk. Bennett (2003) describes an incident in Lombok in which a young woman ran off (leaving behind her betrothed) to join a Balinese tour guide whom she had met in a bar in a tourist area. While the anthropologist argues for a prima facie case of drink spiking as precipitating the sexual encounter and the subsequent flight, in local terms, her behaviour was explained as evidencing the use of 'love magic' by the Balinese lover. In Sulawesi, and in other parts of Indonesia, I have often heard stories of male and female high-school students or migrant workers, living away from their families and thrown into mixed-sex communities of adolescents, who became victims of 'love magic', motivated by illicit sexual desire by one of their opposite-sex peers.

I found that among married women in Soroako, the consequences of free choice marriage were all too clear. Many may have entertained the idea of a love match, but settled for the partner of their parents' choice. In the 1970s, already-married women generally supported the idea of arranged marriage. 'If you marry whom your parents want and he turns out to be no good, then they have to take you back'. 'Anyway, our parents love us and would not do what they thought was not best for us'.[10] The two sets of parents, as instigators of the match, had a responsibility for looking after you. If you married according to your own will, you also had to live by the consequences of that decision. Ironically, in the contemporary situation of the mining town where women had lost independent access to the means of production (land), the issues at stake were even more consequential than in the pre-capitalist economy (Robinson 1983). Hence, under conditions of modernity, women may be freed from ties to the family and its reproduction, but simultaneously introduced to new forms of subordination and exploitation—either the kinds of low-paid work described in the previous chapter, or (as in Soroako) the disappearance of their agricultural-based activities and the lack of viable alternatives.

Some married women claimed that they had resisted marriage, or rather the consummation of a marriage, because they resolutely opposed their parents' choice. Resistance to arranged marriages, however, became more common in Soroako in the 1980s. Marriage used to be the quintessential expression of kinship-based power, manifesting the moral authority of older relatives to determine the fate of the young. Resistance to arranged marriage points to the new

gender order and forms of domination within which personal relations are constituted.

Young women's rejection of the marriage partners chosen by their parents was evidence of their resistance to the control of their sexuality and person. There were instances of young women threatening to run away with their boyfriends if the parents did not agree to the match. In terms of customary norms, even such a threat would be shameful. Many women were successful in getting their way. While I saw several brides who tearfully endured marriage ceremonies with the men chosen by their parents, I saw others in which the girls put up significant resistance. One ran away several times, until the ceremony was finally held. Whereas the Islamic *nikah* (finalizing of the marriage contract) can be conducted with only the groom, the bride's guardian (*wali*) and two witnesses,[11] the important public occasion in most parts of Indonesia, the *duduk bersanding*,[12] where the bride and groom sit on a dais before assembled guests, absolutely requires the presence of the bride. Her absence means that it must be cancelled.

After one such occasion, where the bride ran away but was eventually married in accord with her parents' choice, for several weeks after the ceremony, I would see the reluctant bride at the mosque with the single girls, attending the voluntary evening prayers (*tarawih*) during Ramadan, the fasting month. She and her friends made it clear that she was resisting the husband's efforts to consummate the marriage, although he was living in her parents' house. In a curious engagement with a modern icon (associated with women's 'freedom'), one of her friends pointed out she was wearing jeans, as part of her strategy to foil his attempts; that is, the jeans functioned as a kind of a chastity belt. In an interesting postscript, I visited the couple several years later, now with two children and living in their own house. They presented as a 'modern' couple with a companionate-style marriage: they sat side by side and both joined in a free-flowing discussion about family planning and adultery, with a degree of equality and openness that struck me as unusual.

In the transformed world of the company town, young women in Soroako resisted their parents' choice because of romantic visions—they either had a preferred partner, or felt no romantic desire for their potential spouse. In one particular case, this was in spite of the fact that by local standards the man was spectacularly wealthy. In another case, it was explained to me that 'it's because it's her [the young woman's] *saudara*' (sibling—close relative of the same generation, in this case, her first cousin), and that he was already 'old' (probably about 30); the romantic ideal was someone youthful and perhaps an outsider. That is, the ideal object for emotional attachment was undergoing transformation.

What do these changes mean for men in terms of marriage? Both men and women have customarily been subjected to the power of older kin in arranging marriages. In the company town, young men were the wage earners. They were the most desired spouses,[13] and had the ability to act on their own desires in terms of marriage, and many did. The basis of this change, however, was not

just the import of new ideologies such as individual desire/will, or romantic love. Drawing on Appadurai's conceptualization of the 'ideoscape' with its perspectival quality, and Tsing's illuminating metaphor of 'friction' in local global encounters, the possibility of marrying for love was also consequent on economic changes, from a peasant economy where wealth was in the form of land controlled by elders, to a class-based economy where households were dependent on wages earned by (mainly) younger men. In the previous chapter, I noted the link between waged work for young women and the exercise of sexual freedom and marital choice.

Romantic love and associated ideas of the fulfilment of sexual desire have proven to be extremely motile in the global economy. Their manifestation in particular settings, however, cannot be assumed to be the working out of a unilinear progress towards a better world. Indeed, if we look at these changes in the context of Soroako, the forces, that are delivering the (apparently) emancipatory movements towards personal autonomy are simultaneously enmeshing people into a global economic order that incorporates new forms of domination. For example, young women factory workers might be able to select their own marriage partners, but their exit from the family and kinship-based forms of power is through becoming low-paid workers in global manufacturing. The gender order is implicated in a broader transformation in structures of domination, for example, new ways of expressing sexuality consequent on the state-sponsored adoption of modern contraception. What can appear as a gain in personal autonomy can also be seen as a shift from a social world in which personal life is enmeshed in local forms of domination based on kin relations (especially sex and generation) to one in which global economic and cultural flows provide new forms of subjection.

## The reconstitution of sexuality in the family planning programme

The state-sponsored family planning programme exemplifies the contradictory effects of policies that directly impact on constructions of masculinity and femininity. The programme was regarded as one of the 'success stories' of the New Order regime. In the late 1990s, it was estimated that around 60 per cent of fertile married women were using some form of modern contraception, and the government was praised for innovative distribution networks reaching out into the community (Warwick 1986; see Chapter 3). Reproductive rights have been a signature of second-wave feminism in Western countries, but in Indonesia, the imperative to make modern contraception available to the mass of the population came from foreign donors (Blackburn 2004).

A consequence of the programme is the separation of sexuality from reproduction. On the one hand, increasing numbers of women are using contraception, enabling them to have intercourse without having to worry about pregnancy. The mainly female-focused birth control technologies distributed by the government programme—pills, IUDs, implants and injections—have made it easier for them to make reproductive decisions without consulting male

partners, but at the same time, have substituted state controls on personal life for those arising from kinship based forms of power. Marrying later (the 1974 Marriage Law stipulated a minimum age of 19 years for males and 16 years for females) is significant in this change, but critically important is the use of modern contraceptives, which are replacing the traditional methods through which Indonesians have directly and indirectly regulated their fertility.

The family planning programme has made fertility control a female concern; in contrast, traditional methods, which included practices of abstinence and non-coital sex, imposed disciplines and responsibilities on both women and men (Alexander 1986; Robinson 1989). For example, withdrawal (*'azl*) is recognized in the *fih* as allowed (*mubah*) but with the wife's consent, as it is 'objectionable' (*makruh*) because of the possibility of negating a woman's sexual pleasure (Umar 2004a). In the community of Soroako, a man whose wife had too many children too quickly was regarded with scorn, as someone who did not shoulder his responsibilities for his wife's fertility and well-being. The modern female methods being promoted create an image of female sexuality as always ready, the complement of a hydraulic male sexuality which needs immediate gratification.

Fertility control promoted by the programme is not predicated on assumptions of the connections between women's power over their fertility and personal autonomy, as in the discourse of Western feminism. The family planning programme is concerned with rational bureaucratic control of women's bodies, and the harnessing of the energy of mothers to produce model Indonesian citizens and workers. This is an aspect of the construction of embodied femininity (women's *kodrat*, or biological destiny) that defines women's citizenship in modern Indonesia. In family planning discourse, the emphasis has been not so much on the disciplining of feminine sexuality, but on the taming of its product. The fecundity of women's bodies was presented as a threat to the economic well-being that the development doctrine (*pembangunan*) of the New Order promised. This attitude allowed the abuses of women's rights, and led to the concerns about quality of care that were taken up under Khofifah Indar Parawansa's leadership as head of BKKBN in 1999–2001 (Hull and Adioetomo 2002).

The sanitized propaganda of the family planning programme has ignored issues of sexuality. But users do not separate discourse of fertility control, sexuality and gendered bodies. For example, in Soroako, I frequently encountered a belief that male sterilization would result in the wife becoming adulterous. Women's concerns about the side-effects of contraception often relate to the disruption of the ordinary functions of women's bodies, such as irregularities in menstruation. Because the programme has considered sexuality only in the context of reproduction, the needs of adolescents have not been acknowledged (Indar Parawansa 2002; Utomo 2003).

The company medical services in Soroako ran a family planning programme that mirrored the practices of the state programme (Robinson 1991b). Women's

complaints about the negative effects of contraception on their bodies were not taken seriously by health personnel. Quality of care (the principal concern of the 1994 ICPD conference in Cairo) was not on the agenda. Those who complained of pain or irregular bleeding with IUDs or injectables were urged to put up with it. Couples who chose the non-invasive method of condoms, dependent on male responsibility which echoed that adopted in traditional ways of thinking about sexuality and fertility, were listed as problems to be chased up—to 'upgrade' their methods—by family planning workers (Robinson 1991b).

In spite of the reproductive emphasis, the unhinging of sex from reproduction enabled by the programme has had the paradoxical consequence of increasing sexual activity outside marriage. Several decades of contraceptive use have apparently changed how women experience their own sexuality. One study, for example, found Balinese women increasingly likely to view their sexuality not within the context of family and motherhood but as an expression of their own personal freedom (Parker 2001). Bali has had the highest contraceptive prevalence rate—71.9 per cent in 1991—of any province in the country (Biro Pusat Statistik 1991: 109), but the sexually active youth of Indonesia are not exposed to information about contraception, which is seen to be relevant only to family relationships (Utomo 2003). As private sexual behaviour changes, this lack of information on reproductive health exposes young men and women to the risk of Sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), unwanted pregnancy and (for the girls) unsafe abortion (Bennett 2005).

New Order ideology encompassed notions of modernity: the individual citizen and his/her rights and responsibility, and ideas of the rational control of (out of control) natural bodies. The government used the family planning programme as a cornerstone of the project of developing the sentiment of citizenship and creating the family as the foundation of the nation through enrolling the population in a state programme. Such propaganda campaigns are referred to by the neologism (*sosialisasi*). The government effectively used modern media to spread this message, but there are competing images of sexualized femininity in circulation.

The models of femininity associated with the 'Islamist turn' post-Suharto constitute an attack on the transformations in gender and sexuality over the last three decades. Modern urban middle-class Islamists are avowing the positive values of large families. While female circumcision has been practised in Indonesia, there are no cultural groups where it was universal (as is male circumcision for Muslims), and also it was usually practised in a manner that was symbolic rather than invasive. Commonly, in both Java and Sulawesi, it was carried out by traditional midwives who made a small prick in the clitoris in order to draw a drop of blood (which I was told in South Sulawesi, would be displayed on a piece of cloth). There are now reports of urban middle-class Islamist women taking up a more severe form of female circumcision, for themselves and their baby daughters, in an adoption of a foreign cultural practice deemed as a kind of Arabization by Indonesian Islamic traditionalists.

Accompanying this reconstruction of femininity, there has been public promotion of polygamy by prominent men (see Chapter 7), which Islamic feminists see as illegitimate because it is presumed to be an expression of male lust, which New Order public morality demanded be expressed in a secret manner.

**Prostitution**

The growing importance of prostitution as a source of income for Indonesian women expresses both the commercialization of human relationships and a sexualization of Indonesian culture that has accompanied Indonesia's growing engagement with global economic and cultural flows. Indonesian cities (since the 1960s) often have officially designated areas (*lokalisasi*) where sex workers can register and rent rooms, as well as being subject to surveillance of their health by government officials and pimps. The low wages for young women in both formal and informal sector employment makes sex work an attractive option, especially when young migrant women are away from the scrutiny of their families. Even in the controlled *lokalisasi* that principally serve less affluent urban men, earnings are very good compared with formal sector employment. Women are able to remit money to their families and build houses in their home towns (Hull *et al.* 1999).

The tandem influences of sexualization of culture and global capitalist penetration of the economy were well illustrated in the mining town of Soroako. Mining operations typically are in remote locations, requiring the company to import materials and provisions to house and feed its workers. To reduce costs, mining companies recruit sectors of the labour force on 'single status', meaning that the company takes no responsibility for housing their families. The resulting concentrations of single males create markets for bars and brothels.

In Soroako, prostitution flourished in the otherwise male spaces—the bars and restaurants. This set new terms for sexual encounters. Some of the young men enjoyed the new possibilities for the performance of masculinity, describing to me how they would go to one of the bars and order one bottle of beer among a group of them in order to have a hostess sit with them and flirt and grope (*meraba-raba*).

Preferential employment of male laborers in mining means that there are limited employment opportunities for women in mining towns; hence, there are strong economic imperatives for women to become sex workers.[14] Women are also drawn into commercial sexual arrangements as 'contract wives', who live with men for the duration of their man's contract. Murray (1991) describes similar arrangements between male expatriate workers and Indonesian women in Jakarta. The official New Order position saw prostitution as the consequence of moral depravity. In Indonesia, prostitution is not criminalized and is dealt with by the social welfare system, not the criminal justice system. Sex workers are officially termed (*wanita tuna susila*), women without morals. But Murray argues that just as a woman may choose factory work as a means of escaping the economic and social constraints of village life, so might a woman choose

sex work because she prefers it to working in a factory. Or there may be no alternative—the likelihood of this has risen as opportunities for employment in the informal sector have declined under government pressure to modernize petty commerce.

Kempadoo (1998) has argued that much of the revulsion of commentators towards sex work springs from an unreflective assumption about the relation between sexual activity and expression of the self. She argues that women in many situations may dwell within a differently embodied femininity in which commercial sex does not have a debilitating effect on their personhood. The significant issue is the kind of conditions under which they work. In Indonesia, elite prostitutes are a small minority of all the women involved in the sex industry. The majority of sex workers face substantial risk to their health from STDs, including the rising risk of AIDS, as well as from alcohol and drug abuse. Women also face the threat of violence and intimidation from both clients and 'protectors', and requests for clients to use condoms to protect sexual health is a common cause of violence against sex workers.

Women are at danger of being exploited by traffickers. Young women are frequently tricked into sex work by entrepreneurs who offer them jobs in restaurants. Some have been sold into brothels by their parents (Hull *et al.* 1999). In some cases, migrant sex workers have been kept against their will and denied access to money to prevent them from returning home (there are many stories about such duplicity from the tourist areas close to Singapore, such as Batam). Many are young and inexperienced, and unable to negotiate the journey home, often over a long distance. There is a thin line between legitimate recruitment practices and outright trafficking, and recently, more information has come to light on organized trafficking of women for sex work. The NGO Solidaritas Perempuan has made trafficking the subject of a national campaign, as they view this as a serious and growing problem. The Kendari (Sulawesi) group told me of a case early in 2006, in which a school teacher was involved in an attempt to traffic three of her students to the port city of Makassar. Only one girl was taken in by the 'scam' and she was rescued by associated women's groups (including LBH APIK) in Makassar.

The number of sex workers apparently increased as a consequence of the economic crisis. Silvey (2001) describes the drift of many of the young women workers in the Makassar industrial zone into sex work as the factories shut down. Not only did jobs in manufacturing disappear, but also the informal sector—traditionally a site of 'family labour'—has undergone a renaissance since the monetary crisis as the formal sector shrank. These changes affect the work apportunities available to Indonesian women.

## Youth sexuality

A different kind of engagement with modernity seems to be exemplified by the phenomena of the *perek* (*perempuan eksperimental*), also euphemistically termed ABG (*anak baru gede*—newly grown children) in which young girls—often

school or university students—have sex with (often older) men in return for money and presents (Hull *et al.* 1999). For these young women, sex is a way of accessing products of consumer culture. The mobile phone is both a desired consumer object to buy with their earnings and the means to arrange assignations with their clients (*Fajar* 2007). Their independent deployment of their bodies marks a dramatic shift from gender orders that exercised strong controls on young women's sexuality in practices such as child marriage and arranged marriage.

During a short stay in Soroako in 1985, I noted two hastily arranged weddings in which the bride was already pregnant, including one involving the daughter of a village official who had previously told me how he had forced marriages for far lesser breaches of propriety—for example, a man visiting a woman in her family home on repeated occasions—in the mid-1970s. In both cases, the weddings were modest celebrations, in itself something of note, as weddings are the major occasions for public affirmation of a family's status according to the size of the party and the prestige of the guests (Robinson 1986: Chapter 10). Weddings organized quickly, intended to 'close off' a family's shame, are termed 'fried banana weddings', indicating that the few guests are provided only with inexpensive snacks, rather than the elaborate feasts of meat and rice through which the two families usually publicly celebrate their connection in marriage.

If premarital sex was a phenomenon in the 1970s, it was well hidden. In contrast, in 1985, I had ample evidence that it was becoming more common, not least from the hastily arranged marriages. A young friend told me how she took advantage of her widowed mother's absence from the house to tend her fields, to allow friends to meet there for illicit encounters. She took obvious delight in her subversive activity (she herself is now an 'unmarried mother', something unheard of previously). The new conditions of life in the larger and more socially and economically complex mining town led to more opportunities for activities not governed by customary norms. For example, as families tried to juggle the new desire to educate their children with the need to support their families in the changed economic circumstances of the mining community, young women would be left in charge of the village house to oversee the education of younger siblings while the parents stayed away on the farm, often some distance away as the mining company monopolized land close to the village. Cathexis in interpersonal relationships between young adults no longer developed in the context of the arranged marriage, but rather in an environment where the young people acted out their own felt desires.

Linda Bennett's (2005) study of the sexuality of young women in the town of Mataram (in Lombok) confirms this picture of a higher degree of sexual activity associated with sites of modernity in Indonesia. The young women in Bennett's study, however, are constrained in their apparent new freedoms because of their ignorance of sexual matters and the difficulties they experience in getting access to contraception and safe abortion. Young women bear a disproportionate amount of the risk of sexual activity (Utomo 2002).

## Conclusion

The dramatic social changes in Indonesian society consequent on the development strategy of the New Order government and the related opening of the archipelago to the global economy and culture have been accompanied by shifts in gender that challenged both the official gender regime and the gender orders of the constituent cultures of the archipelago. Changes associated with the 'sticky encounters' (Tsing 2005) within the global economy have impacted not only on the manner of women's economic participation, but also on modes of expression of femininity and masculinity. Global discourses are not uniform, with internationally originated Islamic discourses of the feminine and global human rights discourse now competing with the hegemonic national representation of idealized femininity. In addition, new models of masculinity are circulating, including the feminized 'metrosexual' that has proved popular in middle-class popular culture, the gay identity that is competing with older kinds of transgender identities (Boellstorff 2002) and the violent jihadist.[15]

Women have become more able to make choices for themselves, as a consequence of new economic roles and exposure to mass media images of differing norms of female behaviour. Innovative constructions of sexualized romantic love draw their power from images circulated through new entertainment media, all of which are increasingly difficult for governments to control even when there is a will to do so. Indeed, exemplifying the difficulty of controlling such media, the popular singer Inul Daratista came to national stardom on the basis of a 'cottage industry' of VCDs of her performance circulating without the involvement of a music production company. The flow of ideas ('ideoscape' in Appadurai's [1990] terms) of romantic love and its valorizing of sexual desire (especially the sexual desire of young women) cut across the trope of rationalized sexuality promoted in the family planning programme. At the same time, the commercially driven circulation of sexual images and the growth in prostitution have created new opportunities for exploitation of women. Here we see the engagement of bodies as the raw material of gender discourse writ large:

> Bodies are both objects of social practice and agents in social practice. . . . The practices in which bodies are involved form social structures . . . and personal trajectories which in turn provide the conditions of new practices in which bodies are addressed and involved. There is a loop, a circuit, linking bodily processes and social structures. In fact, there is a tremendous number of such circuits. They occur in historical time, and change over time. They add up to the historical process in which society is embodied, and bodies are drawn into history (Connell 2000: 47).

The development strategy of the New Order led to profound changes in Indonesian society, not least in the gender order and associated forms of social embodiment. Some of these changes are a direct consequence of the exercise of state power through government programmes designed to remake the people of the archipelago into a unified citizenry and the family as the cornerstone of the

state. The education system and programmes such as family planning depend on the regulation of the individual and the separation of individuals from kin groups beyond the nuclear family, and are thus closely linked with the state's gender regime. The New Order economic transformation of the country on capitalist lines created new forms of women's work in contradiction with the dominant trope of the 'domestication of women' in their official ideology. The refashioning of sexuality in the engagement with global forces resulted in unpredictable 'sticky' encounters. The modernizing capitalist forces that promise prosperity have also involved the constitution of consumers and hence the valorizing of autonomy for the individuated self. Perhaps an iconic representation of this moment is represented by the young women who fill the shopping malls of the provincial city of Makassar, dressed in tight jeans but with their heads covered by the *jilbab* as they browse in the shops selling products of the global market (but which are alongside stalls selling Indonesian food, and luxury shops selling *busana Muslim*, or Islamic dress). While '*saleh*' (pious) is a term increasingly invoked to designate idealized femininity, these young women are dubbed '*seksi tapi saleh*' (sexy but pious).

Young Indonesians might be experiencing themselves increasingly as subjects of romance and/or free expression of their sexuality, with their choices understood as acts of pure will. Others are finding self-expression through a global order associated with modernist Islam. Engagement with new gender regimes associated with divergent cosmopolitanisms signifies their insertion into relations of power and domination as well as new forms of subjectification (Robinson 2007).

# 6 Political Challenges to the State Gender Regime

Gender relations and debates about gender equity figured in the political discourse of the nationalist movement, but aspirations for women sharing in the exercise of power have been difficult to realize. Under Suharto's New Order, legal instruments seemingly in contradiction with the constitution enshrined women as secondary to men in the household and the labour market (Katjasungkana 1999). The military command structure of the state made political mobilization difficult. The demonization of the mass organization Gerwani as part of the founding myth of the New Order justified the excision of women from politics by crushing independent women's organizations. By the early 1970s, the state formally organized women into two official organizations, the PKK and Dharma Wanita, and Law No. 5/1975 legislated the maternal-focused participation of women in development and specified the links between PKK and the state to this end. The groups associated with major Islamic organizations, such as MNU, withdrew from politics as they felt intimidated by the political climate, in particular the banning of village-based political activity and the growing identification of Islamic organizations as a principal site of opposition to the regime (Machrusah 2005).

This did not mean that women's politics died: in the late New Order, emerging women's groups and key decision-makers in the national bureaucracy championed an increase in women's power in both domestic and public arenas, expressed as an increased role in decision-making (*pengambilan keputusan*—the 'code words' for political power). Islamic women's organizations continued to function as mass-based organizations reaching into villages that supported women's interests, while not overtly political. This chapter discusses the way women's organizations found democratic space to pursue political agendas that have challenged the state gender regime, arguing for a position that equates gender equity with a broadening of the democratic base (see Soetjipto 2005). Urban middle-class groups worked within a secular feminist agenda that retained links to international women's organizations, functioning in a prevailing political climate that did not allow free-flowing political debate, or freedom of political association. Religious organizations, with their roots in villages through religious study groups (such as Majlis Taklim),[1] and the provision of health and welfare services,[2] were poised to re-engage with politics after the fall of

Suharto. The chapter concludes with the small gains women have made in formal access to political power in the post-Suharto era.

A common criticism of international feminism is that it promotes an agenda of limited relevance to women outside Western developed nations. This chapter begins with an investigation of the manner in which a seemingly paradoxical commitment by the authoritarian government to international rights agendas opened up democratic space within which the state's gender regime could be challenged. As noted in the introduction, women's organizations were directly engaged in the protest movements that toppled Suharto. Has the Reform period been associated with radical transformation in the state gender regime? Reform of gender relations is a critical area of political contestation in post-Suharto Indonesia, its implications reaching far beyond the specific realm of relationships between men and women, to the heart of the authoritarian character of the state.

## International gender regimes and Indonesian policy

From its inception, under the radical nationalist President Sukarno, Indonesia has endeavoured to carve out a role for itself as an international leader, symbolized in Sukarno's hosting of the Asia–Africa conference in 1953 (commemorated by a 50-year anniversary in 2003) or more recently, its assertion of a leadership role in regional organizations such as Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN). Indonesia has been an enthusiastic participant in regional meetings and international forums sponsored by the UN, including the series of international conferences on women, the first of which was held in Mexico in International Women's Year (1975) and the subsequent International Development Decade for Women (1976–1985). The Mexico conference was followed up with international conferences in Copenhagen (1980), Nairobi (1985), and Beijing (1995). Indonesia has ratified the 1952 UN Convention on Political Rights of Women (Law No. 68/1958) and the 1980 Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) (Law No. 7/1984), and endorsed the resolutions of the International Conference on Social Development (Copenhagen 1994), the International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo (1994) and the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing (1995) (Indar Parawansa 2002: 71). These meetings have provided policy frameworks that have been realized in Indonesian government initiatives. Official documents proudly announce that Indonesia was the first country in the region to establish a 'women's machinery', a Ministry of Women's Affairs in 1978.[3] At that time, the government instituted the practice of publishing a chapter on women in the major policy framework of the New Order period, the Broad Guidelines on State Policy (GBHN) that were drafted for each five-year planning period. The 1978 version, the first to include a chapter on the role of women in nation building, identified women's citizenship in terms of their status as wives and mothers.

Subsequent iterations of the GBHN reflected gender issues as articulated in the international arena, and the scope has been gradually broadened to

encompass women as actors in the public sphere. In 1983, the GBHN acknowledged the broader contribution of women to economy and society, and that women have a *peran ganda*, or dual role, in the home and in the broader economy (although their economic contribution was emphasized in relation to their family responsibilities). As noted in Chapter 4, the 1993 GBHN emphasized women as workers, mainly in terms of improving their quality as 'human resources' to contribute better to national development (Sen 1998a). The 1993 GBHN expressed the goal of men and women as equal partners (*mitra sejajar*) and stressed the importance of women's role in decision-making (*pengambilan keputusan*). The term '*gender*' (indexing 'gender analysis') was introduced into the GBHN in 1999. The women's chapter in the GBHN always refers back to the clauses in the 1945 constitution, which acknowledge equal rights, duties and responsibilities of men and women as citizens.

The official line on women's rights expressed in the GBHN manifests the 'efficiency principle' in relation to implementation of feminist claims: policy-makers adopt goals for women not specifically to achieve equity goals valorized by feminist theory and politics, but as a strategy to achieve broader development objectives. For example, improved access to contraception is valued, not to improve women's control over their reproductive choices, but to reduce population growth; women's education is important, not because it is fundamental to overcome power imbalances between men and women, but to improve 'human resources' in order to progress the nation. The civil marriage law, that women had so long struggled for was achieved, because it suited the government agenda of population control, especially through minimum marriage age.

In 1983, the women's ministry was upgraded from a junior to a full ministry represented in cabinet, and was renamed the Women's Affairs Ministry (Menteri Urusan Peranan Wanita—MENUPW). Official documents from the ministry announce Indonesia's commitment to international agendas through frequent reminders that the country has ratified the UN Convention on the Political Rights of Women and CEDAW. However, Indonesian activist women pointed out that in the Suharto period Indonesia only signed four such international human rights instruments (the other two being the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of Apartheid), and that it had a worse record than countries such as Bangladesh or Libya, which had respectively signed nine and eighteen such instruments (Budiarjo 1995).

What motivates Indonesia's embrace of international agendas? In large part it stems from national pride, the imperative to see itself as a regional leader. Indonesia is sensitive to the place it takes on the international 'league tables' such as the UN social development indicators. For example, maternal mortality in Indonesia is high (307 per 100,000 births), and higher than that in comparator countries.[4] After an international conference on maternal mortality in 1987 (Shiffman 2003), the government responded to the massive problem thus spotlighted by launching a Safe Motherhood Strategy in 1987, followed up in 1996 by the maternal mortality movement Gerakan Sayang Ibu (GSI—Cherish Mothers Movement) which focused on facilitating women's access to modern

health care services when giving birth. In addition, Indonesia is reliant on foreign donors and multilateral agencies for development funds that require expressions of commitment to international rights agendas as a condition of funding. Even though maternal mortality is an important issue of gender inequality, Blackburn (2004) notes that the demand for government action did not arise in the women's movement, but in international pressure, although as noted in Chapter 3, Islamic women's organizations were addressing the issue at the 'grass roots' through provision of maternal and child health services that were sensitive to reproductive rights.

The women's ministry was established as a 'state ministry' which means it has never had direct representation in the provinces, unlike line ministries such as health, agriculture or education. It has had an advisory and monitoring role with regard to the programmes implemented by the line ministries, and has been dependent on them to spend the small budget for dedicated women's programmes. Hence, women's programmes have been implemented by officials who often have no commitment to positive outcomes for women (Robinson and Raharjo 2000). However, giving the women's machinery the status of a full ministry, put Indonesia ahead of many other countries (see Goetz 1998).

In an attempt to improve its effectiveness, the ministry took up the notion of 'mainstreaming', which was highlighted in the Platform for Action from the 1995 Beijing International Conference on Women.[5] Mainstreaming is:

> the process of assessing the implication for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy of making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and social spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated (Economic and Social Council 1997 cited in UNDAW 1998).

While the Beijing Platform for Action made it clear that national gender machineries played an important role in achieving 'mainstreaming', it was less clear on how to implement this policy. In the Indonesian case, the lack of a women's machinery outside the centre was a major impediment. During the last five-year plan (Repelita V) of the Suharto government, an attempt was made to extend the effectiveness of the MENUPW in the regions by introducing a women's machinery at the provincial and district levels. This took the form of 'Teams to Advance the Status of Women', known as Tim P2W (Tim Peningkatan Peranan Wanita), which brought together the officials responsible for implementing women's programmes in their respective sectors at the provincial and district level. The teams, under the direct responsibility of vice-governors, were intended to achieve greater integration and complementarity of the programmes in the sectors and to increase awareness of ministry policy.

The influence of these teams on effective policy-making was uneven, and seemed to depend on the energy of a senior woman official, for example in the Regional Planning Agency (Bappeda), to gather any momentum. Frequently, Tim P2W never reached an effective level, because regular meetings were attended by a revolving cast of junior officials sent to represent their superiors who held the formal position on the committee (Robinson and Raharjo 2000).

In a review of the effectiveness of Tim P2W which I conducted with Yulfita Raharjo[6] (Robinson and Raharjo 2000), we identified the lack of understanding by officials of the new language that framed policy initiatives derived from the international policy agenda. The term 'gender' (*gender* or *jender* in Indonesian), used by MENUPW since at least the early 1990s to encompass gender relations, is poorly understood and is assumed by many to be synonymous with women, or, if it is understood to be associated with the structuring of gender relations, to represent some unreasonable demand to upset inequitable gender orders with which men (especially powerful men) feel comfortable. One senior official took me aside and asked: 'Actually, *ibu*, what does this acronym "gender" stand for?' (Indonesian political rhetoric commonly 'plays' with acronyms.) During her period as Minister, Khofifah Indar Parawansa issued a press release officially 'fixing' the spelling of the imported concept as '*jender*', so it would not be confused with '*gender*', a Javanese musical instrument.

In our review of the implementation of gender policy in the regions, Raharjo and I found outright hostility from many of the men charged with implementing the new policy direction. In a similar vein, Wijaya (1996) reports antipathy to and trivializing of the issues of women's equality in the workplace by high-level officials. I have often heard middle-class men, including government officials, equate the movement for women's equality with 'men being ordered to wash the dishes', which on one level is a somewhat paranoid and trivializing reaction, but at another level a recognition of what is at stake in terms of the radical social change involved in a gender regime predicated on equality between the sexes in both the household and public arenas. Wieringa (2002) reported that the same trope—the horror of men washing dishes—was used by Partai Komunis Indonesia or PKI officials in the 1950s to contest women's claims for gender equity. Dishwashing indexes the association of women with the kitchen—the domestic and interior.

These terms are even more poorly understood by people outside the circles of government. This is not surprising, as they tend to be used in policy discussion and only occasionally appear in public discussions such as newspapers, and even less frequently in the more popular mass media, TV and radio. The understanding was not much better among the officials charged with policy implementation, although many of them had at least heard the term '*jender*'.

The Beijing Platform for Action advocated the achievement of 'harmony' between men and women. An official Indonesian publication gives Indonesia a critical role in the genealogy of this idea, stating that at the preparatory conference for the 1984 Nairobi women's conference, Indonesia contributed the concept that: 'Efforts to advance the status and role of women should be based

on a balanced and harmonious partnership between men and women in the common interests of all' (Republic of Indonesia 1987: 12–13). In the last decade of Suharto's rule, the regime began promoting this agenda through the neologism '*kemitrasejajaran*'. Literally, it means 'friendship at the same level' and is glossed by government officials as meaning 'harmonious partnership' between men and women, a concept of gender relations held to be resonant with Indonesian gender orders. While the concept of gender has been simply exported from English, the concept of *kemitrasejajaran* created a new abstract noun from two Indonesian root words (*mitra* = friend, companion and *jajar* = level). While this concept was also poorly understood by officials charged with its implementation, the concept of 'friends of the same level' had the potential to undermine radically the middle-class normative standard for gender relations promoted by the New Order (for example, the Javanese elite idea of the wife as *kanca wingking*). Some of the hostility male officials express to equity-based policies stems from resistance to the right of the state to intervene in what they feel to be a private matter: their relationships with their wives.

The new emphasis on the harmonious gender partnership of men and women (*kemitrasejajaran pria dan wanita*) implied a radical shift from the overall thrust of New Order policies on women that emphasized women's *kodrat* (biological nature, pre-ordained role), and based women's social citizenship in their wifely and motherly roles. The rhetoric of official gender policy was extended by this concept to encompass a notion of equity, and indeed the new term was taken up by activists as a synonym for gender equity. The potential of this new approach to disrupt the dominant gender policies of the New Order was not overtly acknowledged, and the language of *kodrat* and *harkat* (self-esteem and social value) and *martabat* (social standing, level) continued to appear in documents from MENUPW outlining the new approach, which seemingly contradicted the old. While the idea of *kodrat* is commonly invoked and understood (as biological nature), the other two terms have less impact. Indeed, in a conversation I had with women's ministry staff at a gender training course in 1997, one senior official commented lightheartedly that she could never quite differentiate the 'other two'.

MENUPW took up another issue highlighted in the UN gender strategies: the need for good data for adequate gender-sensitive planning (Surbakti 2002). They promoted the establishment of Women's Studies Centres (Pusat Studi Wanita or PSW) at state universities and many private universities followed suit, the number reaching 132 by 2005. These centres promote research and scholarship on women, and provide input into policy agendas in the regions. PSW members sat on the provincial-level women's machinery (Tim P2W) and were charged with assisting local governments prepare *Profiles of the Status and Position of Women* as a basis for more effective planning of women's programmes. The collection of quality statistics that reflect the actuality of women's lives and experience has been a cornerstone of the feminist strategies promoted by UN agencies. While this approach has been critiqued as part of development

practice, as a normalizing and disciplining strategy which discursively constitutes the subjects of development (see, for example, Escobar 1995), a common feminist position has been that standard modes of collecting statistics are 'gender blind' and contribute to the manner in which women are excluded from or disadvantaged by development initiatives (see Rogers 1980; Waring 1988). This omission is also a kind of discursive construction, a normalizing and disciplining process—which is erasure. 'Gender sensitive' statistics, which reveal women's social contribution in domestic and economically productive work as well as the disadvantages they suffer, for example in education and health, have been a cornerstone of feminist policy interventions. For Indonesian women, continuing high maternal mortality is read as a sign of continuing subordination and the political discourse of the Suharto era, as a form of state and family violence against women. High maternal mortality is a counter-story to official triumphalism at the success of policy initiatives such as improvements in female literacy and educational participation levels. The collection of statistics can make visible issues such as high maternal mortality or domestic violence and facilitate political demands on governments.

Although the PSW have not only involved women academics, women play the dominant role, and most are headed by women scholars. They have constituted new forms of officially sanctioned women's organizations, predicated on women's professional roles.

## The significance of the women's ministry

The minister for women has often been the only woman in cabinet. In the Indonesian political system, cabinets are appointed by presidents and (especially since Reformasi) reflect complex balancing of political forces and 'pay back' of cronies. With the resignation of Suharto in 1998, his vice-president, B. J. Habibie assumed the presidential office while preparing for new elections. He formed a new cabinet and MENUPW was renamed MENPERTA (the Menteri Peranan Wanita or Ministry for Women's Roles).[7] An important initiative taken directly by Habibie was the formation of the National Commission on Violence Against Women (Komnas Perempuan), signalling the recognition of gender violence in official discourse (see below).

Habibie failed to win in the 1999 elections. While Megawati Sukarnoputri's PDI-P party won 35 per cent of the vote and hence the largest block of votes in the Electoral College (the MPR), she failed in her bid for the presidency as she was outmanoeuvred by the head of Nahdlatul Ulama, Abdurrachman Wahid, who formed the first Reform Cabinet. He appointed, as women's minister, a critic of the ministry, Khofifah Indar Parawansa—a dynamic woman politician, and activist from the Islamic women's organization MNU. She told me that she agreed (reluctantly) to the commission with the proviso that she could change the name to the Ministry for Women's Empowerment, expressing a desire to make it more 'relevant' to women's needs. During her brief period of office, many important changes occurred in an effort to make the ministry more effective and more responsive.

Khofifah was perhaps the first truly feminist women's minister, and also among the most politically accomplished to hold the post. As deputy leader of the Islamic PKB party in the People's Assembly, Khofifah had shown herself to be effective, for example as a critical voice in the campaign waged around the 1999 elections to deny the possibility and desirability of a woman president, a campaign that attempted to mobilize Islam against the candidature for the presidency of Megawati Sukarnoputri (see Chapter 7).

The change in the name of the ministry, including the shift from the use of the conservative term for woman, '*wanita*', to the more earthy and robust '*perempuan*' was significant. Many women's organizations of the nationalist period had used the term '*perempuan*' from the root *empu*, an earthy, even coarse term for 'woman'. The Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia (the official dictionary) defines *perempuan* as 'a person who has a vagina, is able to menstruate, become pregnant, give birth to children and breast feed them'. It says it can also be a synonym for *betina*, which is used to indicate a female animal. It is listed as occurring in compound words, such as *perempuan geladak* (prostitute); *perempuan jahat* (a woman who behaves badly, deceitful, etc.); *perempuan jalang* (a badly behaved and wild woman who likes to prostitute herself) and so forth. While *wanita* is listed as a synonym for *perempuan*, this term is not associated with negative meanings in the Kamus Besar. It is listed as meaning *perempuan dewasa* (adult woman) and the only compound word listed is *wanita karier* (career woman), 'a woman who is absorbed in the activities of a profession (business, office work, etc.)' which, in spite of the emphasis on domestic models of femininity under the New Order, cannot be taken as pejorative. (However, prostitutes were labelled *wanita tuna susila* (WTS)—women lacking morality—during the New Order.) *Perempuan* was the preferred term of NGOs active in campaigning for women's rights during the New Order. It is a good example of the language of opposition being taken up in the mainstream as power shifts. Khofifah's insistence on *pemberdayaan* (empowerment) is a similar invocation of the language of opposition: a catchphrase of the anti-authoritarian Reform movement that has been invoked as a counter to the New Order preferred term, *pembinaaan* or guidance from above. At the ideological level, this signalled a change in the state gender regime.

The shift of power from the central to the district governments effected under regional autonomy legislation (Law No. 22/1999) in the Habibie period negatively impacted on the ability of the ministry to operate in the regions, however, as the central government no longer has the power to determine the structure of local government. Under Minister Khofifah, the Tim P2W were revitalized as Women's Empowerment Teams, and ministries and provincial and *kabupaten* (district) governments were requested to establish dedicated *biro* (bureau) to directly implement gender equity polices. *Biro* have to be funded from the district budget, and to date not many local authorities have seen this as a priority area. The few *biro* that have been established in the newly empowered districts are small and poorly funded. Khofifah's period in office was short, as Abdurrachman Wahid (nicknamed 'Gus Dur') was forced to resign in 2001, to

be replaced by Megawati Sukarnoputri who appointed Sri Redjeki Sumaryoto as women's minister who reported that in September 2001, only nine regions had established *biro* (*Kompas*, 14 September 2002). The women's ministry is still able to exercise influence on national policies and campaigns, however; for example it spearheaded the women's voter education campaign for the 2004 election, and is very active in campaigns against trafficking in women and children.

## Can international agendas impact on state gender regimes?

As a political movement with its origins outside formal government institutions, feminism has been successful in promoting women's rights within international organizations, most evident in the UN-sponsored world conferences on women which have attracted high levels of participation by national governments, as well as by NGOs. The high-profile role of NGOs does lead to a feeling on the part of some national governments that they are being undermined, however (Baden and Goetz 1997: 12).

Has Indonesia's engagement with the international feminist agenda gone beyond the production of slogans? Activist criticism targets the instrumentalism needed to achieve the adoption of feminist goals inside the bureaucracies of governments of varying political casts and the compromises women make to achieve public acknowledgement of a women's agenda.

The experience in Indonesia mirrors that in many other nations which have embraced the UN strategies, in that much of what has been put in place lacks substance. The Indonesian feminist activist and scholar Hestia Wijaya commented that, even though gender issues are clearly written into important documents at the macro level, the operationalization in programmes has been poor. At the village level, women's interests have been presented as synonymous with family welfare (the PKK) and maternal citizenship (see Wijaya 1997: 2). The feminist human rights lawyer and politician Nursyahbani Katjasungkana (1995) questioned the value of CEDAW (to which Indonesia became a signatory in 1984) in a situation of political repression. How can women pursue their rights as workers (as is intended under CEDAW), if workers in general do not have the right to free association, to unionize, or to free speech?

A different view was put by the Indonesian feminist intellectual Tapi Omas Ihromi who commented that while there are limitations in the international instruments (in particular CEDAW), because they depend on serious and effective implementation by national governments, they can also be used as a *perkakas yang ampuh* (an invulnerable instrument) by activists—because of the requirement by signatories to report to the international forum. They are a means of creating 'democratic space' in an authoritarian regime. Participating countries formally reported to the Beijing conference on their progress in implementing the Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women which was the plan of action from the Nairobi women's conference, and signatories to CEDAW have their performance monitored and critiqued by the UN CEDAW committee.

Would gender equity, or women's rights in general, have made it onto the public agenda of New Order Indonesia at all without this externally originated push?

At the international level, there is critique of the dominance of Western-originated discourse in the gender and development debates, for example at the 1995 UN Fourth World Conference for Women held in Beijing (Baden and Goetz 1997). For Escobar, women in development (WID) policies share the problematic character of all development practices: they involve the 'colonization of reality' (1995: 5) and lead to the creation of client categories, structured agendas and bureaucracies (ibid.: 180). He argues that the demands for a WID agenda have not come from Third World women themselves, and that the international agenda has the effect of obliterating women's own experience. While he gives some credit to the UN Decade for Women, and WID practices in general, for increasing the 'visibility' of women (ibid.: 184), he ultimately concludes that the specific development discourse concerning women amounts to a 'costly gesture', 'a way of producing change without changing the nature of the discourse as a whole' (ibid.: 217). This critique presumes that Third World women are outside the global feminist agenda.

However, there has been dynamic interchange between national and international agendas. The nationalist-period vision of gender equity was influenced by intellectual currents in Europe (as indeed was nationalism). Indonesian women have a long history of involvement in international movements and assemblies, from Kartini's participation in the Exhibition of Women's Labour, through involvement in the conferences of the non-aligned movement and contemporary involvement in UN agencies and women's conferences. Indonesian women from the National Commission for the Advancement of Women—Soewarni Salyo, Nani Soewondo and Yetty Rizali Noor—were reportedly actively involved in drafting some of the articles of CEDAW, through their participation in the 1975 International Conference on Women and also at UN headquarters (Sadli 2002: 86). Indonesian women have been part of the global elite who have contributed to the formulation of the international women's agenda.

The senior figure of the contemporary Indonesian women's movement, Saparinah Sadli wrote:

> For Indonesian women, the struggle for gender equity is not new, and because of [this history] it is wrong to assume that the women's movement is very much influenced by western ideas (2005: xxiii).

She goes on to note that the concept of 'gender' might be new, but the *semangat* (zest, desire) to realize equity and justice between men and women has inspired (*menjiwai*) the struggle of Indonesian women since colonial times.

Escobar's view draws on a critique that Western feminism ignores axes of difference that mark women's experience such as nationality, race, religion and

class. The importance of these multiple bases of identity and subjectification cannot be denied, but Iris Marion Young (1994) asks whether this implies that there cannot be a feminist politics. She mounts a powerful argument that takes account of the empirical fact that women from different subject positions are hailed by the identity 'woman' and forge political alliances on that basis. Conceptually, woman can be understood as a social series, a special kind of 'social collectivity' in which 'members are unified passively by the objects their actions are oriented around' (ibid.: 23) rather than a group which is a 'collection of persons that recognize themselves and one another as in a unified relation with one another' (ibid.: 23). As a series, '"woman" has a structural relation to material objects as they have been produced and organized by a prior history. . . . Gender, like class is a vast, multifaceted, layered, complex, and overlapping set of structures and objects. Women are the individuals who are positioned as feminine by those activities' (1994: 28). The sexual division of labour, and its reference back to reproduction and bodies are fundamental to the constitution of the series. Worldly action proceeds on the basis of individual recognition of membership of a series, but the individual relation to the 'practico-inert objects that position them as "women" is highly variable' (ibid.: 29).

Contestations over gendered forms of power in Indonesia do not originate only in post-World War II development discourse. Moreover, claims for women's rights based in UN strategies do not fundamentally differ from those claims that have historically been produced within the Indonesian nationalist movement, which envisaged a society in which men and women were equal citizens. Conceptualizing women as a series and not a group enables us to understand how, for example Muslim and secular nationalist women, or women originating from the diverse gender orders of the archipelago, have been able to pursue common agendas while recognizing massive differences in the bases of their social identities, and consequent matters like polygamy. Indonesian women activists have utilized international agendas, but they also have their own traditions and practices of struggle. Women's politics in Indonesia exemplifies par excellence the practice of transversalism, in which there is recognition of divergent positionings and a constant flow of communication in the creating of political subjects. Transversalism recognizes difference, which is encompassed by, rather than replacing, ideas of equality (Yuval-Davis 2004: 17). That is, acting as members of a 'series' activist women can embrace others' points of view without abandoning their own. Indonesian women have looked outward to international agendas—including Islamic feminism, discussed in the next chapter—as well as looking inward, to accommodate difference.

International agendas provide leverage for domestic claimants for political rights, and legitimacy for their actions. The international agenda provides a language, and also programmes, which local groups can use in political contestation in their country. Contra Escobar, I would argue that globally produced discourses have contributed to dislodging the official discursive framing of gender relations, and this challenge has effects beyond the performance of women's roles. While

Escobar argues that WID policies, like all development practice, can be principally understood as producing knowledge about and exercising power over the Third World, there is a body of feminist writing that claims women in developing countries can utilize the discourse of the international movement to challenge domestic gender regimes. International institutions provide ready-made models for policy that can be utilized when they have limited resources to do it themselves, a process referred to as 'model mongering' (see, for example, Miller and Razavi 1998). This can provide a structural advantage to groups who are otherwise relatively powerless in terms of other modes of influencing policy (Russell and Sawyer 1999). As noted above, the 'women's machinery' was put in place in Indonesia as a consequence of the World Conference on Women in Mexico in 1975. Women were singled out for specific consideration in the GBHN as a consequence of the Women's Decade. Endorsement of documents such as the Forward-looking Strategy from Nairobi or the Beijing Platform for Action establish reporting requirements for participating governments, and hence makes visible issues such as the disproportionate domination of men in all areas of public life. The utility of 'model mongering' is clear in situations like Indonesia's New Order where few modes of influencing policy to achieve equitable social goals have been available to Indonesian women, or to the Indonesian people in general.

The political utility of such ready-made agendas is well illustrated by the activities of a group outside the bureaucracy, the Convention Watch Group, set up in 1994 to monitor the implementation of CEDAW (Sadli 2002). It involved some of Indonesia's most respected women social scientists, including Professor Saparinah Sadli, who was appointed by President Habibie as founding head of Komnas Perempuan, the National Commission on Violence against Women. Members of the Convention Watch Group particularly focused on Article 11, conducting research to assess the extent to which Indonesian employment legislation and practices conformed to CEDAW, and then publicized their findings. Thus the convention provided a framework for a radical critique of government policy, by a high-profile group. They have been able to voice the kinds of criticisms for which trade unionists were jailed.

While conducting research on the effectiveness of the regional women's machinery in 1999, I met women legislators in one province who had published their own gender analysis of the provincial five-year plan, with alternative policy recommendations. They had been trained in gender analysis by Nafsiah Mboi, a prominent political figure who is also the wife of a past governor of the province and a former member of the national parliament who subsequently worked at the UN. In a regional meeting called by the ruling party (Golkar) prior to the 1999 elections to discuss the GBHN for the in-coming government, one of these women legislators challenged the party leaders to explain why the discussion of women's social participation is prefaced by reference to their *kodrat* (biological capacities) whereas the discussion of other social groups, such as men and youth, does not stress their biology. 'Because we value women', she was told (Mien Datu Oejoe 1996, pers. comm.).

Yuval-Davis (1994) has reminded us of the wrong-headedness of assuming the commonality of goals among all women. This is true internationally and it is true in Indonesia domestically. The women bureaucrats in the women's ministry, for example, are middle class—well educated, in (relatively) secure employment. In the 1990s, middle-class, urban Indonesian women took up issues such as the negative representations of women in mass media, and initiated public discussion around issues of sex discrimination, and sexual harassment in the workplace. The issues for poor women have a different emphasis—protection of their rights as workers, food security issues, and maternal and child health. Hence the international policy framework engages the attention of the middle-class bureaucrats on the issues that are not 'their' issues, most notably high rates of maternal mortality which became the focus of a government campaign, as well as those dealing more directly with their own concerns.

In the repressive politics of the New Order, women's social participation stood out as an area of political life in which the government embraced a rights discourse. Soft as the concept of *kemitrasejajaran* might seem, it allowed an official airing of the notion of women's rights when it was difficult to have a public debate about rights in many other areas of social and economic life, such as local communities having their traditional rights in land recognized in the face of land-hungry private and government 'development' projects; or workers having minimum rights of pay and conditions enforced. Sue Blackburn (1991) has posed the question: 'What has democratization got to offer women?' But we can also ask: What have campaigns for gender equity got to offer democratization? Aside from providing space for the articulation of women's interests, the gender equity agenda allows the articulation of the notion of rights, and women's rights are not only manifested as their rights *qua* men, but also their rights as, for example, workers. This is clear in the activities of the CEDAW Watch Group. The international agenda has provided women with a basis for acting as citizens in ways that contradicted the normative definitions of femininity promoted by the New Order.

In his writing on social movements, Melucci (1989) argues that the claims of the women's movement have implications for democratic change beyond the parameters of their immediate demands (for women), precisely because they put claims for recognition of difference into the political arena. Under the New Order, difference was managed: political talk in terms of differences in race, ethnicity, religion or class was banned,[8] but gender difference (as officially defined) was acknowledged as the subject of public discourse. The significant presence of women activists and women's organizations in the demonstrations that brought down the authoritarian regime of Suharto stands as an affirmation of the importance of the feminist agenda for democratization. In the absence of free-flowing political debate or a public discourse on rights in the Suharto era, the international agenda for women provided a hook onto which Indonesian activists could hang some of their claims and achieve changes at the level of government discursive framing of gender. This enabled the public airing of a

rights discourse including the ability to 'spotlight' transgressions of rights of workers and also public debates about different expressions of femininity.

## The challenge by NGOs to state gender regimes

Melucci (1989: 196) stresses the creative aspects of social mobilization that enable people to experience personal growth, while Laclau (1990: 128) argues that 'egalitarian discourses and discourses on rights play a fundamental role in the reconstitution of collective identities'. Since the late 1970s, NGOs have proliferated in Indonesia as a consequence of the 'increasing frustration of social activists and intellectuals with government restrictions on the political activities of parties and socio-political organizations' (Berninghausen and Kerstan 1992: 193). A ban on political activities in universities following noisy and violent protests over a visit by the Japanese prime minister in 1978 led to student activists seeking another sphere for their activism. Many became involved in small-scale, community-based projects that addressed the difficulties faced by ordinary people as a consequence of New Order development strategies (Berninghausen and Kerstan 1992: 193). Characteristically, they have concentrated on educational and income-producing programmes at the local level. While many of the NGOs took women as their specific focus, their approach mirrored that of the government in highlighting women's potential to improve the welfare of their family, in particular through increasing their income-earning potential. According to Berninghausen and Kerstan (writing in the late 1980s), very few championed issues of women's autonomy, or sought to address (and redress) power imbalances within Indonesian families (1992: 208–10).

However, the 1980s also saw the development of a number of feminist-inspired NGOs, which challenged the taken-for-granted assumptions of the (mainly male) leadership of the organisations. For example, the women's NGO YASANTI sponsored a seminar in 1988 which critiqued the dominant welfare approach of Indonesian NGOs, questioning whether improvement in the economic status of women would automatically translate into improved status relative to men (Berninghausen and Kierstean 1992: 209). A number established explicitly feminist agendas that sought to transform the basis of gender relations in Indonesia. One of these, Kalyanamitra, established in 1984, is an organization of middle-class activists committed to transforming or overturning gender inequality in Indonesian society. Their position rests on analysis deriving from the international feminist movement, using concepts such as 'gender inequality' and 'patriarchy'. They run a centre in Jakarta and see their main role as educative, providing documentation and information on women in Indonesia, and serving as a conduit for feminist theory (Triwijati 1996). Their visitors' book shows that journalists and researchers frequently utilize the library, or seek advice from staff. They were among the first to introduce Indonesian Muslims to the writings of Islamic feminists such as Fatimah Mernissi or Nawal al Sadaawi for example (see Chapter 7). In addition, they provide information for

individual women on services that can help them address problems in their personal lives or in their employment relations. Located in the front room of a Jakarta suburban house I visited in the early 1990s, I found a hive of activity. The personal style of the women working there was striking in the Indonesian context: eschewing the highly stylized artifice of the dominant modes of femininity, they replace the feminine dresses, make-up and neat hair for jeans, scrubbed faces and a self-assured rather than self-effacing demeanour. The Islamic scholar and activist Siti Ruhaini Dzuhayatin set up an anti-violence group—Rifka Annisa—that established a woman's refuge in Yogyakarta and opened public debate on the issue of domestic violence. Another organization with a radical agenda with regard to transforming gender relations is Solidaritas Perempuan (glossed in English as Women's Solidarity for Human Rights), whose advocacy of women workers was discussed in Chapter 4 (Triwijati 1996). In these organizations, we can sometimes see clear divergence between the expressed aspirations and articulated issues for women of different classes, regions and religious affiliation.

In the Reform period, cross-class alliances are becoming more common. For example, in 2001, I attended a day-long national meeting in Jakarta on 21 April, celebrating the anniversary of the birth of Kartini (Hari Kartini). While many well-known and high-profile women activists were in attendance, from the octogenarian S. K. Trimurti to contemporary figures like Chusnul Mari'ah (a leading political scientist and member of the Electoral Commission), and Ita Nadia from Kalyanamitra, there were a large number of energetic participants who were from Jakarta's slums, women who are involved in the activities of the Urban Poor Consortium organized by Islamic feminist activist Wardah Hafidz. In the final plenary session, several of these non-elite women were rapporteurs for the preceding small group discussions. Their reports presented their interests as wives and mothers seamlessly entwined with their concern for economic survival. Interestingly, these women seemed to express a conviction that Megawati Sukarnoputri (at the time vice-president) would be responsive to their concerns (whereas the middle-class activists were less convinced).

The corporatist women's organizations PKK and DW have been transformed in the Reform period. Soon after the Suharto government fell, there were protests demanding that they be disbanded, because of their strong 'baggage' of the New Order project of domestication of women. The feminist wife (Sinta Nuryah) of President Abdurrachman Wahid announced that membership of these organizations was no longer compulsory. DW has been renamed DW Persatuan, and its executive no longer has to reflect the (male-dominated) hierarchy of the parent organization. PKK is also now voluntary: in about 50 per cent of cases it has withered away, but in many places it is still functioning, organizing *posyandu* (maternal and child health posts) and other activities (Marcoes 2002). In some areas, PKK has been transformed into one of the Forum Warga (Citizen's Forum), which have been enabled by the new Regional Autonomy law (Law No. 22/1999).

## Suara Ibu Peduli and the 'politics of milk'

Established during the 1997–1998 monetary crisis, Suara Ibu Peduli (SIP—Voice of Concerned Mothers) focused on the high price of food, including milk, and the difficulties this posed for housewives. The protests were organized by middle-class intellectual women associated with the magazine *Jurnal Perempuan*, who identified the rising prices of basic commodities as having particular concern for women, because of their long-standing responsibility for household well-being. As described in the introduction, SIP staged one of the earliest of the protests that led to Suharto's downfall; their protest occurred at the roundabout outside the Hotel Indonesia that has subsequently become the favoured spot for political protests. TV pictures broadcast the dramatic images of police arresting the middle-class women, their anxiety manifested although they continued to protest. The trial, in which they protested not just the economic crisis, but the 'crisis in trust' in the government symbolized by the denial of their constitutional right to free speech, gained more publicity and triggered a spontaneous growth of SIP. This protest had extraordinary resonance with lower middle-class and working-class women, who have now established local chapters and set up *warung sembako* (stalls selling the nine basic commodities) to help deal with the effects of the financial crisis (*krismon*). Indeed, within a few years, lower middle-class women came to control the organization. SIP has grown into a mass-based organization with branches all over the country (Subono 1999).

While much of the women's movement worked to overturn New Order tropes, for example in substituting *perempuan* for *wanita* in public discourse, SIP invoked the valorization of women as mothers used by the New Order for repressive ends, stressing their long-standing role as providers of basic livelihood for their families. During the occupation of the parliament, SIP organized logistic support, especially by supplying the demonstrators with food. Some of the women involved in the food distribution told me that the occupiers had become alarmed at an anonymous donation of food originating from a large, fast food chain. As noted in the introduction to this book, the women feared that the food might be poisoned or contaminated as a strategy to break the occupation. Hence, women activists set up a series of kitchens across Jakarta that prepared food and organized its delivery to the protestors.

SIP has been criticized for using the concept of mother (*ibu*), a trope that was central to New Order authoritarian strategies, with claims that a feminist politics based on difference has the effect of reinforcing and deepening the limiting ideology of femininity that characterized the New Order (see, for example, Sen 2002). However, Melani Budianta (2002) commented on the manner in which the appeal to the figure of the *ibu*, the mother struggling to provide for her family under the difficult economic circumstances was able to 'touch and move' the people. SIP has been able to extend its membership and mobilize extensively using this trope, especially among lower middle-class women who had not previously been politically active. The reports of housewives in Argentina protesting the regime and the disappearance of their children captured

the imagination of many Indonesians (see Subono 2000). Middle-class activists tell moving stories of women who made great personal sacrifices from already tight domestic economies to support the activities of the organization.

The SIP strategy expresses a feminist politics that gives a positive gloss to women's activism that arises on the basis of motherhood (see, for example, Kaplan 1997). While state practices have intensified women's association with mothering (for example, through the PKK and DW), women's activism on the basis of motherhood has made a counter-hegemonic use of this trope, as a strategy of resistance to state policies which threatened a fundamental concern of poor women (and a taken-for-granted aspect of femininity in most of Indonesia)—their ability to feed their families. Motherhood can provide the basis for women's activism and resistance to state gender regimes, because of:

> [t]heir different gendered experience, based on their roles as people who centre their world view more on relationships than on abstract rights, and in their roles as primary caretakers in the family (Brown and Ferguson 1995: 147).

The intensification of their identification with the domestic through their household labour and maternal duties can be the basis of a counter-mobilization of power.

State Ibuism was an important facet of the state's legitimizing strategy—a naturalizing of the patriarchal authority of the father within the family and hence the state (see Chapter 3). The significance of the familist ideology of the New Order went beyond its implications for relationships between men and women: it provided a naturalized model of hierarchy and authority, the patriarchal family providing a model for society at large, and most importantly for the exercise of political power. It validated not only the exclusion of women from public life but also, significantly, the absolute authority of those in power. From this trope flowed the logic of the 'unnatural' character of political criticism and the legitimizing of the management of dissent and opposition through authoritarian strategies.

The ideological manipulation of the family trope by authoritarian rulers is evident in 'Asian Values' debates in neighbouring Southeast Asian countries (see Robinson 2000b). Given the wide-ranging implications of the familist ideology of the New Order, women's counter-hegemonic use of the role of 'mother' is more significant as an act of resistance than critics give it credit for. If women can stand up as mothers against the fathers, the familist paradigm totters.

The events of May 1998 indicate that ideas of democratic rights and justice find places to flourish, even under authoritarian regimes. The 1990s, in the last decade of Suharto's rule, was marked by the flowering of NGOs, including many organizations championing women's rights. The challenge to the repressive forms of domination of the New Order came from an alliance of social forces including NGOs, students, and Islamic organizations. In the demonstrations leading up to Suharto's resignation, there were also groups that

participated on the basis of their political identification as women. As the movement for reform grew in the chaos of the monetary crisis, women's organizations were one of the community groups poised to take advantage of the new political climate.

Women were involved in the demonstrations of May 1998 and the occupation of the parliament building that led to Suharto's resignation. Echoing the roles played by women in the struggle for independence, other women drove ambulances to collect the wounded during the days of rioting and protest in mid-May. Activist women at the parliament organized themselves into a new political coalition, the Koalisi Perempuan Indonesia untuk Keadilan dan Demokrasi (KPI)—Coalition of Indonesian Women for Justice and Democracy—to address the issue of women's rights in the hoped-for democratic political reform. This group brought together individual women, and groups, who had been involved in an increasing volume of activism around issues of women's rights in the last decade of Suharto's rule (see Robinson 1998a). It issued a proclamation calling for Suharto to resign, and demanding that he and his cronies be investigated and tried for corruption. They take credit for being first to articulate this demand, to which the government was eventually forced to respond. The women's group protested at the exclusion of women—and non-Muslims—from the political negotiations with the president, and they were critical of the male leaders of the Reform movement, who they saw as too willing to compromise with the Suharto regime.

Underscoring the power of the feminist critique to undermine the underpinnings of the authoritarian order, KPI organized a national women's congress in Yogyakarta in December 1998 which invited Gerwani women: it was one of the first occasions which aimed to reconcile former associates and members of the Communist Party (Partai Komunis Indonesia or PKI) which had been banned after the mass killings that ushered in the New Order.

## Political violence and women

Women's groups galvanized around the issue of the rapes of Chinese women during the riots and looting which shook Jakarta on 13 and 14 May 1998. Throughout Indonesia women condemned the violence. Some Muslim women's organizations refused to endorse the suggestion that the attacks on Chinese women were part of a *jihad* (holy war), alternatively declaring it an attack by men on women. The analysis with wide circulation among women's organizations is that women are used as instruments of terror in war, and the parallels of the rapes associated with 'ethnic cleansing' in the former Yugoslavia have not been lost on them. Women also noted similarities between the Jakarta victims' stories and the accounts of rape at the hands of the military of women in East Timor and Aceh.

Non-government groups, such as the women's organization Kalyanamitra and the humanitarian organization Tim Relawan (Volunteers for Humanity), provided support for the victims of the brutal and politically motivated rapes.

The victims were tortured and mutilated. Many were killed, or died as a result of their injuries. The government (including the Minister for Women's Affairs in the Habibie cabinet, Tutty Alawiyah) initially denied the reports of rape, and the individuals and groups working to support the victims and document their cases were threatened. Many victims were too frightened or ashamed to declare their experience and seek justice. A young woman was murdered on the eve of her departure to the USA to bear witness to the rapes. Interestingly, the corporatist group DW and the official national women's congress Kowani did not remain silent or support the government but joined with activists, women academics and NGO representatives to form the People Opposed to Violence against Women (Masyarakat Anti-Kekerasan Terhadap Wanita) which successfully lobbied President Habibie in July 1998. He responded to their submissions by establishing Komnas Perempuan (The National Commission on Violence Against Women) to look into the issue of violence against women, including the May rapes, and appointed leading women activists and scholars to the body. They were able to document the occurrence of the rapes although estimates of numbers vary, because of the reluctance of many victims to speak out about their ordeal. Many were supported to travel overseas for treatment after their experiences of indescribable violence and terrorization.

Public dialogue about the rapes (including the government's controversial initial denial) created a new space for discussions of violence against women, which was a 'public secret' under the New Order. The UN CEDAW committee criticized the government for failing to document or address violence against women.[9] NGOs had already put the issue on the agenda, for example, organizing around the murder of Marsinah discussed in Chapter 4; also there had been women's refuges established, most notably by the Islamic feminist group Rifka Annisa in Yogyakarta—public debate had been muted as it ran counter to the prevailing gender ideology of the New Order, and the dogma of social harmony that it supported.

The discussion of the May events was quickly followed by revelations of the systematic use of rape by military personnel against civilians in the provinces of Aceh and Timor Timur, both of which had long campaigns of armed resistance against the Indonesian state. While stories of these atrocities had been circulating for some time, they had never been the subject of wide public debate in Indonesia and overseas. Women's organizations (in particular SP for Human Rights) had been trying for several years to have the government take action concerning violence (including rape and even murder) inflicted upon Indonesian housemaids employed overseas, usually by their employers (see Chapter 4). Following the emergence of violence as a key issue for women in the troubled politics of the post-Suharto era, the need to protect the rights of overseas migrant workers received public and eventually government attention (see Chapter 4). Their activism achieved a response in Law No. 39/2004 on the Placement and Protection of Indonesian Workers Overseas.

Women's groups made violence a focus of activities. For example, on Human Rights Day (10 December) in 1998, there were large demonstrations by women

in Jakarta and other urban centres demanding action on the issue of violence, broadened to include not just the acts of war in the context of military repression, but also violence routinely experienced by women, for example at the hands of their husbands. Domestic violence progressively emerged as a major issue. Women also demonstrated on the UN Day of Protest Against Violence Against Women,[10] on 25 November (*Jakarta Post*, 26 November 1998), using the international agenda to highlight their cause. The coalitions formed in the campaign of opposition to violence against women have sprung up all over the archipelago, exemplifying the new activist networks that Budianta (2002) argues characterizes the post-Suharto period.

Women have continued to organize street demonstrations, especially opposing violence, on the symbolic days in the national and international calendar. For some women, the continuing high maternal mortality rates, and the evidence of duress in the family planning programme, are included in their characterization of systematic and institutionalized violence against women. The important 1998 protest by SIP is invoked symbolically in many of these protests: for example, women in Makassar, South Sulawesi, have adopted a major intersection in a new urban freeway as a site for protests (for example, on the International Day of Protest Against Violence Against Women) and they replicate the SIP strategy by walking into the traffic and handing flowers to motorists.

## Political significance of women's NGOs for the exercise of political power

Feminism is essentially a social movement and so concerned with identity formation. Social movements unite around shared interests and goals: 'They are what they say they are. Their practices (and foremost their discursive practices) are their self definition' (Castells 1997: 70). Social movements begin outside the formal political process, where parties and power groups represent more coalesced sets of interests, such as those based on class.

The Reform period has seen the emergence of a range of new organizations representing women's interests, and the politicization of groups that were formerly apolitical, such as associations of women traders, showing a fresh consciousness that their economic fortunes cannot be separated from the strengthening of women's political rights (Budianta 2002). New organizations include institutions serving women's needs such as crisis centres set up by social and religious organizations (see Marcoes 2002) and the National Commission on Violence against Women (Komnas Perempuan). Established organizations, such as the women's groups associated with the major Islamic organizations, have expanded their activities: for example, NU Fatayat set up crisis centres in twenty-seven districts by 2002 (Marcoes 2002). Significant emerging organizations and activities are associated with coalitions of forces outside Jakarta. However, Budianta (2002) is concerned that this local level remains invisible to the national press and to international eyes such as aid agencies and foreign scholars.

Women activists that Budianta interviewed in 2001 proposed that women are working within emerging paradigms and civil society organizations; according to Nunuk Muniarti, women are working in a new paradigm 'based on women's lived realities, connected to their identity as women' which they do not find in mainstream politics. Kamala Chandrakirana (now head of Komnas Perempuan) comments that '. . . women try to find new forms of organization that suit their needs, new institutions that can strengthen civil society'.[11] She comments in relation to (some) women's rejection of the formal political process that they are rejecting the moral and ethical values of politics, seen to be wanting.

However, the women's movement exhibits the contradictory relationships that social movements commonly have with the political system, for example calling for democratization and greater political participation, but doing so from outside the formal institutional structures. While they can appear to be rejecting the processes of formal politics, social movements often aspire to make the political system more responsive to their demands. In feminist politics in contemporary Indonesia, the quest for structural changes for improvements in the rule of law in regard to women encompass rights in marriage, rights to protection from violence and sexual predation, and equality before the law. The formal institutions of the state provide significant underpinnings to patriarchal power. There is concern that women have difficulty making their voice heard, to press these claims in the formal political domain.

Movements for gender equity cannot avoid the institutions of formal politics if they hope to achieve their goals, not least because this allows for groups with opposing perspectives to take control. We can see this happening in a number of the newly empowered districts (*kabupaten*) with the shifts in power since regional autonomy was legislated in 1999. The emphasis on a return to *adat* as a basis of regional autonomy has in many places opened the way for powerful groups to advance their interests in the name of a revival of purported distinctive local traditions, and gender relations is no exception to this. In many districts local power brokers have introduced local regulations ostensibly based on sharia, many of which police morality, selectively imposing restrictions on women's movement and dress (see Chapter 7). The mutability of culture and the interpretative space it allows can permit an embracing of patriarchal values under the guise of the re-inscription of *adat* and sharia (see Noerdin 2002) in local regulations (*perda*), and this has indeed been accomplished in some newly empowered districts.

A number of feminist political theorists, following on from Pateman, have argued that democracies based on elected representative institutions have tended to valorize the public at the expense of the private, and this is the reason that formal political institutions in a democracy have not represented women or their interests. This exclusion derives from 'the implicitly gendered character of liberalism's image of the rational, autonomous self' (Johnson 1994: 74). The private sphere has an ambiguous status in relation to the public/civil realm. The political task facing women is to challenge this covert anti-egalitarianism and to rupture the barrier that excludes matters of 'the private' from becoming the subject of public reflection and discussion. To cite Iris Marion Young:

> The feminist slogan 'the personal is political' does not deny a distinction between public and private, but it does deny a social division between public and private spheres, with different kinds of institutions, activities and human attributes. Two principles follow from this slogan: (a) no social institutions or practices should be excluded a priori as being the proper subject for public discussions and expression; and (b) no persons, actions or aspects of a person's life should be forced into privacy (1990, cited in Johnson 1994: 86).

The identity politics pursued by the Indonesian women's movement focusing on issues such as violence and family livelihoods, can be seen as part of the political struggle to bring those arenas of life deemed private, and hence excluded from public reflection and electoral politics, into the public domain of political contestation. While social movements campaigning for gender equity have achieved the strengthening of women's position in many sites outside the formal institutions of politics, since the colonial period women's groups in Indonesia have expressed the importance of making the formal institutions responsive to their demands. Matters deemed to be in the realm of the 'private' must become the subject of concern of formal state institutions.

NGOs and other civil society groups in Indonesia have actively pursued goals of increasing women's parliamentary representation, and providing extra-parliamentary support for legislators pushing for significant reforms. The coalescing of formal politics and social movements is discussed in the next section.

## Does Reformasi extend to reforming gender relations in formal institutions of politics?

As Women's Minister, Khofifah Indar Parawansa introduced a new approach, based on women's empowerment. 'Empowering women is achieved by improving women's role and status in national life through . . . institutions that struggle for the actualization of gender equality and justice' (2002: 73). Invoking the nationalist period, she stressed that it was important to maintain the 'historical value of women's struggle' (ibid.). In her short period in office, Khofifah identified a range of legislation that she argued was gender biased and in need of reform (including the Marriage Law, the Law on Citizenship and the Law on Population) (ibid.: 73) Thus, she set the agenda for several important subsequent political campaigns.

She also focused on violence against women and children. One of her initiatives was the establishment of Special Investigation Rooms for victims of violence, staffed by female police officers (in 163 districts and cities) as well as special facilities in health centres (ibid.: 75). These facilities continue to function and have provided a focus for co-operation between female police officers and anti-violence activists (Ilmi Idrus 2006, pers. comm.).

Middle-class women have been at the forefront of demands for increased female representation in positions of power in Indonesia. Since the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, the issue of women's participation in the institutions of government has been more vocally addressed by middle-class women equating gender equity and political democracy. For example, many of the contributions to a book edited by Oey-Gardiner *et al.* (1996), including the introduction to the volume, emphasized the importance of increasing women's role in 'decision-making'. This concern was also highlighted in the 1996 government publication *Profil Kedudukan dan Peranan Wanita* (*Profile of the Status and Role of Women*) (Republik of Indonesia 1996).

Women's representation in the institutions of the modern Indonesian state has been low. In the early 1990s, only 1.4 per cent of village heads were female. In the national legislative bodies, the People's Consultative Assembly (DPR) and the People's Representative Council (MPR), there was a slight rise in the proportion of women representatives from 5.5 per cent of the total in 1971, to 10.1 per cent in 1992 (although the proportion dropped after Reformasi—see below). Does having women in parliament represent empowerment of women? Indar Parawansa (2002: 72), herself a member of the legislature, comments that in the Suharto era 'most women politicians were appointed on the basis of their connections with prominent men'.[12] Women are also under-represented in the upper echelons of the civil service, and in the military (ibid.: 73).[13]

Indonesian legislatures have been circumscribed in their power; nonetheless, Indonesian women legislators (and activists) have identified increasing representation of women in the national and provincial legislatures as an important goal, both for its symbolic value and because they feel it gives them an opportunity to influence government policies that impact on women. The shift from executive to legislative power in the Reform era has provided new opportunities for women to press for law reform as an important strategy to achieve gender equity.

The 1998 election was the first in which women's issues became campaign issues, albeit low-key (Sadli 1997). Female representatives of all three parties contesting the elections (Fatimah Achmad of PDI—the Democratic Party; Siti Hardianti Rukmana (Suharto's daughter) of Golkar—the government party; and Aisyah Amini of PPP—the Islamic Party formed by a forced amalgamation of Muslim parties by the New Order regime) all discussed the necessity of increasing women's participation in development programmes to realize the officially sanctioned goal of gender equity (*kemitrasejajaran*). They all pointed to the obstacles women faced in achieving equity in public and family life, including discrimination, cultural practices, and access to health and education. Fatimah Achmad presented the most sustained critique of the barriers facing women in their quest for greater social participation, focusing on their lack of power in both family and public life. She argued that legislation should be put in place to ensure women's enjoyment of the equal rights guaranteed by the 1945 constitution. She was also critical of the existing women's organizations for their failure to promote increased political participation by women. The

'gladiatorial' aspect of the 1998 elections was the implicit struggle between the deposed leader of the (then) PDI, Megawati Sukarnoputri (who later became president), and the then President Suharto's daughter, Siti Hardianti Rukmana (known as Tutut) of Golkar. At one point, Tutut had been touted as a possible vice-presidential candidate and successor to her father, but her political star waned with his decline. Megawati was the indirect target of a campaign by some Islamic scholars, in late 1998, who instigated a public debate concerning whether or not a female president was allowed according to Qur'anic prescriptions (see Chapter 7). The motive seemed to be as much curbing the possibility of Megawati—a populist leader seen by many at the time as *the* symbol of democratic reform—becoming president, as much as it was a concern for Islamic political values.

Allied to the question of the significance of Megawati as a political figure is that of the strength or otherwise of the representation of women as a group in the formal political institutions of government. How important is increased female representation in the formal institutions of politics and public office for gender equity? How important is women's parliamentary representation as an aspect of democratization?

## Increasing women's representation

Activists on women's issues were disappointed at the outcome of the 1999 elections (for which 57 per cent of registered voters were women) in that the proportion of women legislators actually fell, from 12 per cent in the last parliament of the Suharto regime to 9 per cent. This was understood to be partly a reflection of the fact that many of the women parliamentarians in the Suharto era had been appointed, not so much on their own merits, but in accord with the workings of 'the family principle'—they were the wives, sisters and daughters of Suharto/Golkar/military cronies (Blackburn 1999). Indonesian women have never been excluded from public life, and this is reflected in their visibility in the nationalist struggle as well as in their significant role in everyday economic transactions. However, this has not been translated into significant representation in legislative bodies. Women did not gain many seats in the regional parliaments after the 1999 elections (Oey-Gardiner 2002), and many had *no* women. In the Reform era, activist women adopted the slogan: 'Democracy without the participation of women is not truly democracy'.

In the term of Indonesia's first woman president Megawati Sukarnoputri, between 2000 and 2004, the negative campaign to politicize her sex was not sufficient to neutralize its positive value: that she is the daughter of the founding president, Sukarno, and was drafted as a political candidate by the PDI-P, the party that is the acknowledged successor to his (Nationalist Party) PNI, because of her pedigree. In her campaigning, she successfully invoked symbols associated with her father, especially the call to *merdeka* (freedom), and the emphasis on national unity. She began her 2004 campaign with a pilgrimage to her father's grave in Blitar where, during the New Order, signs posted at the mausoleum

banned the raising of flags, taking of oaths or political speech making, or indeed circumambulation (associated with pilgrimages to sacred sites in Java). While in 1999, these symbols carried her party to win the largest share of the popular vote—one-third of the votes cast—her government's poor performance in office meant that the electorate were ready for a change in 2004.

In the 2004 campaign Megawati was the only woman among the eight presidential and vice-presidential candidates, and again her opponents raised the matter of her sex. While women's groups could take pride in the fact that a woman held the highest office in the land, Megawati is not known for her feminist politics and women were disappointed at her stance on important issues, including the polygamy of her vice-president. She did, however, appoint two women to her cabinet: Sri Rejeki Sumaryoto in the women's ministry, but also Rini Suwandi (a businesswoman) as Minister for Trade and Industry (Oey-Gardiner 2002: 101).

The disappointment at the failure of the democratic electoral process to deliver significant gains for women in politics resulted in demands by Indonesian politicized women organized around the target set at the Beijing conference, proposing a quota of 30 per cent women legislators. Ani Soetjipto had raised the issue in 1997, noting the difficulties women had in receiving party endorsement as candidates (1997: 241). A quota was an effective way to achieve a critical mass. Her article set out the grounds for such affirmative action: women have different interests and needs from men and must be represented in political decision-making bodies so they can articulate and struggle for their own issues (p. 237).

During Megawati's presidency, the government implemented a series of further reforms of electoral laws to allow democratic elections for president and parliament in 2004.[14] Women lobbied to have affirmative action clauses, in particular quotas for women, in the new electoral laws. Unsuccessful with regard to the Law on Political Parties,[15] they succeeded in having a clause (65(1)) inserted in Law No. 12/2003 on elections, that parties are *encouraged* to have at least 30 per cent female candidates for legislatures at national, provincial and district levels. There are no sanctions for failing to do so. The voluntary quota was supported by Golkar, but also by the Islamic parties PKB, PPP and PAN (Soetjipto 2005: 8). During the parliamentary deliberations on the new law, President Megawati did not support the quota, arguing it diminished women's dignity (*martabat*) (Soetjipto 2005: 7). However, it did have backing from the women's ministry and from many NGOs and activists who provided support for the legislators promoting the quota. Saparinah Sadli notes that they were pejoratively termed the '*pasukan jender*' (gender troops) by the press, but she said they did not care as it helped reinforce the understanding that they were struggling for a serious and important change (Sadli 2005: xxvi).

Under the Indonesian electoral system, candidates must be nominated by parties. They are ranked on party lists for the multi-member electorates. Candidates are elected if they win an electoral quota but (as happens in most cases)

no candidates receive a quota in their own right—the votes are accumulated to the party and go to the candidates at the top of the party list. Women candidates have been few and have also usually been awarded the *urutan sepatu* or 'shoe order', that is, the bottom of the list. The feminist political scientist Chusnul Mari'ah, who is a member of the Electoral Commission (KPU) which has overseen party registration, made a public statement in 2003 saying she would not support registration of parties that did not institute the quota in their party lists.

Chusnul Mari'ah was unable to follow through on this, despite her position in the KPU. Parties varied greatly in the extent to which they responded to the invocation. While 17 out of the 24 parties contesting the election achieved the 30 per cent quota of candidates (Soetjipto 2005: 270), and although some women candidates received more votes than male colleagues, the fact that the quota did not require women to be listed in winnable positions (that is, first or second on the list) meant that the outcome was a disappointment, with the proportion of women representatives remaining at 11.5 per cent.[16] In the newly created regional representatives chamber (Dewan Perwakilan Daerah or DPD) women were more successful, holding 21 per cent of seats (Indar Parawansa 2006: 84). DPD candidates did not have to be party endorsed, underscoring that parties proved the major impediment to women's representation, not attitudes of voters.

However, the quota provided a 'hook' for a campaign to vote for women candidates. According to the KPU, there are more women than men who are registered to vote so there was an assumed larger natural constituency. The women's ministry provided logistic support to campaigners, who printed posters, pamphlets and banners urging a vote for women. Many women's NGOs were involved in voter education before the campaign (as they had done in the democratic elections held in 1955 and also in 1999 (see Baso and Idrus 2002)). However, women were not prominent in the campaign, nor were women's issues, although there were reports of women candidates campaigning at a local level on issues such as clean water and health services. A campaign meeting of women in Jakarta did exact a promise from Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono that he would appoint four women to his cabinet—double the previous maximum figure. When he won the presidency in 2004, he followed through on his promise, and appointed women to key economic ministries, as well as the conventional women's and welfare portfolios.

Women's representation is low at all levels of government, with women holding 10 per cent of seats in the regional parliaments (with a range of 0–17 per cent) after the 2004 elections, the first time that regional parliaments were elected by direct vote (Soetjipto 2005: 269).[17] At the lowest level of the state—the village councils—some regions have implemented sex discriminatory *perda* (local regulations), which allow only household heads to sit on village councils (Dewan Kelurahan). This happened, for example, in 2001 in parts of Greater Jakarta (Jabotabek). KPU protested these discriminatory *perda* (*Kompas*, 27 February 2001).

Disappointment at the effectiveness of the quota to deliver higher levels of women legislators has ensured that further reform is on the agenda. Discussions are proceeding among women activists around further reform of the electoral system, for example requiring a 'zipper system' in which party lists are required to alternately list male and female candidates, or introducing sanctions to strengthen the current voluntary quota.

## Are women's issues addressed?

Women have had some successes in promoting the legislative agenda foreshadowed by Indar Parawansa, especially with regard to gender relations within families. Laws are considered within ten special committees (Komisi) of the parliament, and the small number of women means they are spread thinly and are generally appointed by their parties to the stereotyped areas of social issues, welfare and health (Indar Parawansa 2006: 87). They have, however, accomplished passage of a law banning domestic violence (Law No. 23/2004),[18] although efforts to achieve the long-desired review of the marriage law have been less successful. Politically active women attribute the success in the former case to the careful preparation women made, in lobbying parties and extra-parliamentary pressure groups to consolidate support, a tactic that was not followed in the case of the revisions to the marriage law (prepared within the Department of Religious Affairs research section by the respected but controversial feminist Muslim scholar, Siti Musdah Mulia). There have been revisions to discriminatory passages in the citizenship law, so that women married to foreigners now have the right to pass on Indonesian citizenship to their children born in Indonesia (Law No. 12/2006).

Women are overcoming some of the divisions and suspicions of the Suharto period (Soetjipto 2005), forming a women's caucus in the parliament and an extra–parliamentary caucus of women politicians that brings women of different parliamentary parties (*fraksi*) together (Indar Parawansa 2006: 88). Women also constitute what is wittily termed the '*fraksi balkon*' (the balcony party), the supporters of legislation who fill the public chambers during debates on new bills. In 2006–7, women activists successfully held at bay the law on pornography that has broad claims to moral regulation, mainly aimed at women. This has proved divisive, with women in some Islamic parties supporting the bill (see Chapter 7).

Recognizing the importance of 'capturing' formal politics, a group of anti-violence women's activists that I met in Makassar in 2006 stressed that while it was significant that there was now a national law outlawing domestic violence, regional autonomy means that legislation at the national level is, in practical terms, insufficient to achieve change. Women activists say it is also necessary to have national legislation, like the law on domestic violence, reinforced in regional regulations or *perda.* Activist women from SP in Kendari (Southeast Sulawesi) were concerned that the government was not ensuring that judges in local courts were aware of the new legislation: they found that in Southeast

Sulawesi (in 2006) judges were continuing to deal with cases of domestic violence under the criminal code, which allowed lesser penalties than the new law.

## Conclusion

While women actively contributed to the political actions that led to the fall of the New Order and have been engaged in the reconstruction of civil society organizations, they have had limited success in achieving substantive representation for women, that is in getting women's issues on the political agenda. There have been some successes: revulsion at the mass rapes at the time of the 1997 street protests has sparked a public discourse on gendered violence, and there has been a state response to what was formerly a hidden problem, through Komnas Perempuan and also the law on domestic violence. Women have utilized the Beijing agenda to successfully argue for a quota for women in political representative bodies.

Regional autonomy has increased the problems for the women's ministry in achieving outcomes in the districts. Under Khofifah's ministership, the Tim P2W were abolished, and districts and provinces encouraged to set up local offices to be responsible for women's policy. Under the regional autonomy law, districts determine their own administrative structures, and the minister can only recommend a local structure. Indeed, the number of districts that have established a women's office has been disappointing (only nine by September 2001, from over 400 districts and city administrations). The budget available to the women's ministry is also very small (Rp 28 *milyar* (billion) from the budget and Rp 7.7 *milyar* in aid) (*Kompas*, 14 September 2001). On the positive side, the women's ministry seems to have been irrevocably radicalized by Khofifah's brief tenure and it is now much more supportive of women's activist organizations (for example in supporting the movement for the quota and the voter education campaigns before the last election). She also importantly brought the Family Planning Board (BKKBN) under the women's ministry, signalling a shift in an official view of contraception as being about population control, to a concern for women's reproductive health.

While the campaign for the 30 per cent quota has had disappointing results, it has opened up a discourse around women's representation that cuts across party lines. Some of the unsuccessful candidates have joined an extra-parliamentary coalition that will support the women who were elected in drafting policy and legislation. Women in politics are keeping the issue of the voting system on the agenda, arguing that a simple proportional representation system would benefit women. They are also keeping the issue of the quota in contention, with an aim to make it compulsory (Indar Parawansa 2006: 89).

Khofifah Indar Parawansa has commented that the women's movement in Indonesia 'started from a spirit of struggle—against polygamy and for the education of women. Since 1999, when the era of transition to democracy began,

the motivation has changed to empowering women to achieve gender equity and equality. This goal reflects the emphasis in today's Indonesia on strengthening civil society . . .' (2002: 68). The continuity between early twentieth century and early twenty-first century women's movements in Indonesia relates to the continuing campaigns by women to have matters deemed private, and so out of the realm of regulation by civil society, to become issues of political contestation and subject to the regulation of state authority. Some of these goals are being achieved through a legislative agenda that has included domestic violence and women labour migrants. The increased representation of women in the powerful bodies of the state is fundamental to achieving such goals.

Women's demand for greater access to democratic power is important for democratization generally. Women politicians do not automatically share a common agenda: their legislative goals represent also their party, class, regional and other interests. However, the transversal politics of the women's movement, involving the valorizing of women's difference and the demand—supported by Islamic discourse—that gender equity can encompass difference is an important component of Indonesian democratic thinking in the post-New Order struggle for social justice, under the rubric of pluralism.

# 7 Islam and the Politics of Gender

## Introduction

Politicized Islam has emerged as an important force in the democratic atmosphere of the Reform period. Islamic voices that had been subdued under the New Order have found a public stage. Old political arguments that appeared to have been resolved, such as the form of the state (Islamic or secular) and the right of secular authority to regulate marriage, have re-emerged. Gender politics has become an element in competition between elites for the capture of the state, and an Islamist-influenced discourse of 'traditional' gender relations is the front line in an assertion of power by Islamist groups struggling to assert hegemony.

This chapter addresses the gender dimension of current Islamic politics. Beginning with debates before the 1998 elections about the possibility and desirability of Indonesia as a majority Muslim country having a woman president, I then review the re-emergence in the Reform period of controversy about the secular marriage law, the re-legitimization of polygamy, and the attempts by newly empowered local governments under decentralization policy to implement laws based on sharia. These are associated with debate about appropriate Islamic gender relations based on textual interpretations of the Qur'an and *hadith*. Women are active participants on both sides of this debate: as proponents of hermeneutic readings that emphasize humanistic ideals rooted in Qur'anic values linked to an Islamic feminism; and as proponents of literalist readings that argue for subordinated femininities. The first group are particularly associated with the 'localized' versions of Islam related to the so-called 'traditionalists' of NU and assert social justice, democracy and pluralism as fundamental Islamic values. Their opponents, by contrast, draw on Islam to criticize secularism, pluralism and liberalism (*sipilis*) as the root of Indonesia's ills (Robinson 2008).

Gender analysis emerged amongst activists in Indonesia in the 1980s and it became a factor in Islamic thought in the 1990s, following the publication of translations of books by internationally reputable Muslim writers supporting gender equity, such as Aminah Wadud, Asghar Ali Engineer, Fatima Mernissi and Zafrullah Khan. Interest in Islamic feminism blossomed following a visit to Indonesia by Riffat Hassan, and many writers in this genre were published

in translation in the journal *Ulumul Qur'an*, including a special gender issue in 1995. These writers were taken up in discussion groups among students and activists in large towns, such as Jakarta, Bandung and Yogyakarta (Viviani 2001: 4). A number of Indonesian feminist Islamic thinkers came to the fore, notably Wardah Hafidz and Lies Marcoes (ibid.: 1). Consequent on the expansion of Islamic education under the New Order, especially through the State Islamic Institutes (IAIN), Indonesia has a large group of Muslim intellectuals, including numerous women (see Robinson 2008).

Lies Marcoes' 1993 co-edited book *Wanita Islam dalam Kajian Tekstual dan Kontekstual* (in which many contributors cite Mernissi and Hassan) was an early entrant in an Indonesian debate on Islam and gender—the result of a conference supported by the Department of Religious Affairs and Leiden University. Doctrinal interpretation emerged as a key issue, with writers contesting gender-biased interpretations of Islamic texts. They argue for a reconstruction of Islamic values and the eradication of patriarchal traditions that have taken root in Islamic thought and practice that they hold to be in contradiction with the true egalitarian spirit of Islam (Viviani 2001), and with the distinctive Indonesian accommodation between Islam and indigenous values. That Muslim women fought side by side with men in the Indonesian national revolution adds force to the argument for local understandings of Islam that embrace women's rights.

## Islamic textualism in Indonesia

Until the latter part of the nineteenth century, Islam in Indonesia was predominantly an oral tradition. The opening up of sea routes through Singapore facilitated the pilgrimage to Mecca, and Indonesian Islamic intellectuals were able to travel to the Middle East. A number of important Islamic figures spent many years in Mecca or studying in Egypt and these links exposed increasing numbers of Indonesians to the textual tradition. From around the start of the twentieth century, Indonesian Islam developed a literate tradition, especially in the form of the *kitab kuning*[2]—the texts used for study in Islamic residential schools (*pesantren*) (van Bruinessen 1990). The new ideas were not only theological; they also influenced the nascent nationalist movement. As Anderson (1990) has commented, Indonesians imagined themselves as part of a wider Islamic community, and strove to expand those connections before they imagined themselves as citizens of an independent nation:

> One realises how little attention has been paid to the historical fact that in Java, as elsewhere in the colonial world, the first fantasies of liberation [from colonialism] were not at all local, or national in scope—rather they were planetary. In Java, World Revolution (the Communist Party) and Pan-Islam (parts of the Sarekat Islam) *preceded* nationalism, which represented a sharply scaled-down vision (Anderson 1990: n26). (Emphasis in original)

Islamic parties did not succeed in the goal of independent Indonesia becoming an Islamic state, and they became increasingly sidelined as a political force both by Sukarno and Suharto regimes (Hosen 2007). In the New Order period, in a society seen as increasingly corrupt and unjust, Islam was embraced by many as a source of values that could facilitate the establishment of an equitable and just society and Islamic texts were increasingly regarded as providing the basis for politics, as well as personal and social renewal (Brenner 1996: 673; see also Hefner 1993).

The Islamic courts were the strongest Islamic public institution, including in colonial Java, but even these courts did not rely exclusively on the textual tradition in their judgements. They also took account of precedents and principles derived from local customary law (see Bowen 2003: 158; Hooker 2003). As we saw in Chapter 1, customary law influences women's rights in marriage, divorce and inheritance alongside Islamic law. In 1991, a presidential instruction paved the way for a codification of law as practised in the Islamic courts, the Kompilasi Hukum Islam di Indonesia (KHI—Compilation of Indonesian Islamic Law). It reveals the extent to which customary law has been accepted by Indonesian Muslims as part of the body of law that regulates their affairs especially in matters of family law. The KHI is 'certainly the most important document on sharia promulgated in modern Indonesia' (Hooker 2003); but it also expresses the extent to which sharia is interpenetrated by local tradition. Bowen (2003: 158) cites an Islamic scholar who was involved in preparing the KHI:

> Maybe in Arabia the wife does not do anything, but in Indonesia it is not like that. If a man takes up a machete to go out to the fields, his wife comes with him, carrying a bundle on her back. So she had contributed to wealth, either by working on the fields or by taking care of the family, and she should receive some of the inheritance and then we set specific amounts. Here, we differ from *fiqh* [text-based law], we take account of culture.

There have been some instances of the issuing of *fatwa* (opinion on Islamic law or dogma given by a person with recognized authority (Hooker 2003)—see note 3) that stipulate particular principles in regard to women's behaviour or male–female relations. For example, an NU *fatwa* in the 1950s permitted women to ride bicycles. Many of these circulated only within the relevant organizations and on the whole, textual interpretation, including through the issuing of *fatwa*, has not figured prominently in public debate in Indonesia about the distribution of rights and responsibilities between men and women. The latter days of the New Order were marked by a new level of public debate on gender relations based on textual interpretation, between contesting views on Muslim women's participation in public life. This relatively new phenomenon reflected the growing influence of Islamism in Indonesian politics (see Hefner 1993), including the strategic use of Islamist public discourse to gain ground in electoral politics. The question of whether a woman could be a president of a majority Muslim nation was fiercely contested, erupting in noisy political debate in the period before the

1999 elections—the first free elections in Indonesia since the 1950s. The debate was precipitated by the strong possibility that Megawati Sukarnoputri's PDI-P party would win the elections, making way for her to be elected president by the electoral college, the MPR. A precursor debate occurred in 1997, before the last election of the New Order, when it was rumoured that President Suharto's daughter Siti Hardijanti Rukmana (Mbak Tutut) might be his vice-presidential running mate. The question: Can a woman become Vice-President? gave rise to three hours of hot debate amongst the 100 *kiai* attending the regional conference of the East Java branch of NU in November 1997, which resulted in a determination that there was no obstacle to a woman holding this high office. One *kiai* proposed that according to the Syafi'i school of jurisprudence (*mazhab*) dominant in Indonesia, high political office (*imamatul 'udzama*) or the position of judge (*qadli*) in the religious court (Mahkamah Syariah) could be held by a woman. Historical precedents were cited to support this view: participants noted that Aceh (which embraces the Syafi'i school of Islam) had women rulers in the past; and more recently Fatimah Achmad of the Islamic United Development Party (PPP) held the office of deputy president (Wakil Ketua) of the MPR. The Muktamar Alim NU (the NU body charged with issuing *fatwa*)[3] had determined in 1983 that while a woman could not become president, it would be acceptable to have a female vice-president (*Gatra* 14 November 1998).

During the period of parliamentary democracy (the 1950s), NU had issued a *fatwa* in 1957 which stipulated that there was no barrier to women voting or standing for political office (Robinson 2004). Islamic texts relating to women in public life were introduced in the debate; the arguments adduced prefigured later discussions around women's political representation. KH Aziz Mashuri, one of the NU organizers, cited a *hadith* from Abu Bakrah: '*Tidak akan sukses bagi suatu bangsa yang menyerahkan urusannnya kepada kaum wanita*' (Success will not come to a nation ruled by women). However, participants assessed the status of the verse through hermeneutic practices (see Saeed 2006). Some contended that it had to be interpreted by looking at the context in which the utterance was made (*asbabul wurud*). The conclusion was drawn that the *hadith* applied specifically to the people of Persia at that time and was not universal in its application. KH Ali Yafie, a member of the Majelis Ulama Indonesia (Indonesian Council of Religious Scholars, another of the official bodies that can issue *fatwa*), endorsed this interpretation by the NU congress in a subsequent interview in the news magazine *Gatra.* He added that in his view there were no reasons why women could not hold high political office, provided they had the right personal characteristics for leadership, including clear thinking (*akal sehat*), broad knowledge, a sense of justice and support from the people. Professor Asjumi Abdurrachamn, the coordinator of the Majlis Tarjih (Council of Consideration) of the organization Muhammadiyah—another group of religious scholars empowered to issue *fatwa* (Federspiel 1995: 150)—agreed that there was no problem with women holding high office. Hence, the debate at the NU congress 'flushed out' broad support from important figures for

women taking public office (Robinson 2004). The interpretation was never put to the test. Tutut was not selected by the Golkar Party as her father's presidential running mate. This honour went to B. J. Habibie, who assumed office in 1998 when Suharto was forced to resign, and he undertook to hold fresh general elections under revamped electoral laws (Hosen 2003). These promised to be the first free elections held in Indonesia since 1957. The restrictions on party formation were lifted through reform of the law on political parties, and 148 new parties expressing a diversity of political views sought registration. In the newly unshackled freedom of political debate, the issue of the suitability of women for high office resurfaced as the PDI-P, led by Megawati Sukarnoputri, emerged as one of the front-running parties. She proved extremely popular with the mass of voters during the election campaign and looked like a serious prospect for the office of Indonesia's fourth president.

In the context of the increased political activity, a number of Islamic groups came together to hold the third Kongres Umat Islam Indonesia (KUII)—The Congress of the Indonesian Community of Believers—held every five years, whose participants include Islamic mass organizations and the Islamic parties. The plenary session debated a resolution that the president and vice-president should both be Muslim, and male. Supporters of the proposition brought forward another of the texts commonly invoked to deem women inappropriate for public office: the Qur'anic text Sura An Nisa[4] 34. It was argued that this verse states that men are the leaders/managers (*pemimpin*) of women. One of the speakers in support of the motion also mentioned the *hadith* cited above, which states that a people (*kaum*) would not be prosperous/happy (*bahagia*) if ruled by a woman. The congress determined to send the matter to the MUI for a determination (*fatwa*) (*Forum Keadilan* 30 November 1998: 26). Subsequently, the MUI refused to make a determination as there was 'no consensus' and the scholars were unwilling to appear to attack the potential future president (Platzdasch 2000: 347). However, it did make a pronouncement (*fatwa*) urging voters not to support parties that were not clearly committed to Islam. This was seen by many as a veiled attack on Megawati and the PDI-P (Bourchier 2000: 20)[5] that would benefit her political rivals (many of them from Muslim parties). The decision of the congress sparked enormous outcry, and political leaders publicly announced their positions on the matter. The respected Islamic scholar and progressive social thinker the late Nurcholis Madjid emphasized that specific texts needed to be interpreted against the broad commitment to gender equity in Islam. Other scholars argued that the Qur'anic prescriptions cited to argue against women becoming political leaders were misinterpretations of injunctions relating to domestic affairs (for example the Sura An Nisa 34 cited above) or to specifically religious activities. The Indonesian Islamic Students' Association (Pengurus Besar Pergerakan Mahasiswa Islam Indonesia) argued that 'gender and religion' was being manipulated by 'status quo political groups' (the shorthand term used by the Reform movement for the Suharto–Habibie forces). Religion was concerned with morality, and this was linked to the development of democracy and a strong civil society (see Robinson 2004).

The leading Muslim woman politician Khofifah Indar Parawansa (who in 1999 became Minister for the Empowerment of Women during the Abdurrachman Wahid cabinet), as deputy leader of the party associated with NU, Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa (PKB), and head of the NU women's organization Muslimat, acknowledged that Megawati was the target of the discussion, even though her name was not mentioned. She commented: 'I am of the view that many of our *ulama* have not kept up with the development of jurisprudence in relation to women (*fikih perempuan*). Their interpretations need to take account of the contemporary political climate and support for women's rights'. She made an unfavourable comparison with the decision of the KUII and the earlier decision of the 1997 NU Congress which had determined that a woman could be vice-president (*Gatra* 14 November 1998: 45). As the election grew closer the major political parties debated the issue in a:

> complex discourse in which theological interpretations and practical political considerations went hand in hand, the latter frequently seem[ing] to gain the upper hand. While the NU/PKB camp was itself split over the issue, the other main party of the [Islamic] traditionalist camp, the PPP, flatly rejected female leadership. In contrast to the traditionalists, the modernists' scepticism of Megawati was plainly politically based, and rested on her personal political capacity and her party's political platform (Platzdasch 2000: 348).

The apparent cynicism of the use of the religious argument was evident in Abdurrachman Wahid's campaign to win the presidency. While he has long been a champion of women's rights, Megawati's sex was one his arguments against her fitness for office (see Mietzner 2000).

But the attempt to place textual interpretation at the centre of public discussion about women's public roles did not have the desired effect of legitimating an anti-Megawati position. On the contrary, it helped galvanize support for Megawati from people who disagreed with the anti-egalitarian and anti-democratic sentiment of the prohibitionist position. The party that she led won the largest bloc of votes (35 per cent giving her party 153 seats) in the 1999 election. The strong showing of Megawati's party and the relatively poor result for the Islamic parties that had used the religious argument in an attempt to neutralize her[6] would lead us to conclude that there was not strong popular support for the anti-women position supposedly based on the religious outlook of the majority of the population. In the public debate, many Muslim intellectuals endorsed a vision of Islam that supported Indonesia's transition to a democratic society including a commitment to gender equity.

Political pragmatism forced the Islamic parties to accommodate the reality of a female president. In 2001, during the crisis caused by the impeachment of Abdurrahman Wahid (Aspinall 2002), many of the socially conservative Islamic parties who had supported his candidacy (PPP, PBB, PK) announced that it was possible to have a women president in an 'emergency situation'. However,

hard line groups operating outside electoral politics, like Laskar Jihad or Hizbut Tahrir, never accepted the legitimacy of a woman president (Azra 2006: 56). But underscoring the extent of political pragmatism involved, Hamzah Haz of the Islamic party, PPP, became Megawati's deputy when she succeeded Wahid as president in 2001. The woman president debate exhibited the cynical use of gender politics by groups seeking power, as evident in the push to implement local regulations based on sharia (the so-called *perda SI*).

## The introduction of sharia regulations

In the period following Suharto's resignation, there was a strong reaction against the extreme centralization of power under the New Order and its associated enforced homogenization of culture, leading to anxiety that Indonesia would split apart. The Habibie government undertook to return power to the regions, specifically to the (then) 300+ Districts, to obviate the possibility of the nation fragmenting and to support democratization, as it was assumed that politicians would be forced to be more responsible when subjected to much closer scrutiny by their electorates (Rasyid 2003). Decentralization was expected to facilitate the revitalization of traditional institutions that had been displaced by the forced homogeneity of the Suharto era. For example, the 1979 Law on Village Government had stripped power from traditional political institutions and authorities and remade local government on a uniform model derived from Java (Warren 1993). A common view was that the demise of traditional authority had been a factor in the uncontrollable internecine violence that had broken out in places such as Maluku and Kalimantan. In the freer political climate since Reformasi, Islamist groups have returned to their political demand that Indonesia be constituted as an Islamic state. An attempt at the national level to reinstate the Piagam Jakarta ('seven words' added to clause 29 of the Constitution that would oblige Muslims to live by Islamic law) failed during constitutional reforms in the Megawati presidency, but local governments have taken it upon themselves to implement sharia law at the local level in a number of districts (Hosen 2007). This is despite the fact that religion is one of the four functions of government (as well as monetary policy, defence and security and the legal system) that the central government has reserved for itself. The special autonomy zone of Aceh is the only region that has succeeded to date in formally introducing sharia as the basis of local law—in 2000. This was preceded by a period in which local zealots undertook to enforce certain practices, such as enforcing that women appearing in public wear the *jilbab* (Siapno 2002: 36). Women with bare heads were dragged from buses and subjected to public humiliation. The Aceh regulations lack clarity in many areas relating to women's rights such as marriage and inheritance (Syafiq Hasyim, *Suara Rahima online* 1 August 2002).

There have been ongoing reports of abuse of women in the guise of enforcing sharia regulations. A *perda* establishing a dress code and curfew for women in West Java gave power of enforcement to community members as well as police 'allowing them to arrest, harass, assault and publicly humiliate suspected

violators' (Noerdin 2002: 183). Noerdin (ibid.: 179) reports an incident from Garut (West Java) in which a young woman en route to visit her grandmother experienced transport delays and so found herself boarding a public vehicle at 7 p.m. A group of men forced her out of the vehicle, saying she had violated the local regulation of sharia law by being out at night without her *muhrim*. They took off her *jilbab* and shaved her hair. In Tangerang (West Java), a woman shift worker waiting for public transport was arrested and detained, accused of violating anti-prostitution laws. District governments have also enacted regulations that restrict women's freedom of movement and enforce dress codes while not labeling them as regulations based on sharia Islam (*perda SI*) (see Noerdin 2002). Rather, they describe the laws as upholding morality and order (Satriyo 2003: 221). The Minister for the Empowerment of Women in the Megawati cabinet (Sri Redjeki Sumaryoto) identified the necessity of challenging gender-biased local regulations (*Kompas* 14 September 2001).

*Perda SI* are concerned with morality regulation. The targets for behavioural change are women, in matters such as dress codes and curfews. The exception is the move to enact anti-alcohol laws, which are more likely to affect men. There are some dress codes for men, for example civil servants having to wear the *baju kokoh* (Malay-style shirt, identified as Muslim dress for men).

Why do sharia-based regulations target women? Siti Musdah Mulia (who is a lecturer at the Islamic University Syarif Hidayatullah in Jakarta and head of the gender and religion section of the Department of Religious Affairs) stated that every country that has implemented sharia law has begun by attacking women's rights (for example, Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan) which is a 'short-cut' for Islamists to achieving goals, because women are easy targets (cited in Noerdin 2002). She contrasts the current crop of *perda* with the actions of Muhammad who, on entering Medina, first addressed himself to regulating the marketplace and the people's economy, rather than family law and personal behaviour. Islamic intellectuals and feminists have argued that adopting Islamic dress codes must be a matter of awareness by individual Muslim women, and not a justification for violence against them, which is what it has become.

The dress codes for women particularly focus on a compulsion to wear the *jilbab* or tight veil. Head covering became a symbol of Islamic revival, initially amongst campus-based *dakwah* or 'call to Islam' groups in the 1970s and 1980s (Brenner 1996). It soon came to symbolize the stand-off between political Islam and the Suharto regime, which endeavoured to marginalize Islam as a political force. In the 1990s, schoolgirls were banned from wearing the *jilbab* and their rights were successfully defended by Nursyahbani Katjasungkana from the feminist legal rights group LBH APIK. It was the actions of the military in tearing down posters advocating the wearing of the *jilbab* that precipitated the 1984 Tanjung Priok (Jakarta) incident. By the onset of Reformasi, the *jilbab* was becoming common and in many places replacing the loosely wrapped *kerudung*, which had been gaining popularity since the 1920s (see White 2006: 327–9). The initial popularizing of the *jilbab* had occurred amongst educated middle and lower-middle class women, for whom it was a sign of their own personal

commitment to a more pious style of religious devotion and an embrace of an alternative modernity and cosmopolitanism to the Westernized modernity adopted by the New Order (see Chapter 6).

In the Reform period, head covering has been championed by conservative male elites as a way of imposing discipline on female bodies and excluding women from public space. This Islamicized femininity is paired with a form of masculinity that asserts male privilege in the world of public affairs and intimate control over women's bodies that extends into the family. It is expressed as a response to the realignment in gender relations consequent on transformations in women's economic roles and the sexualization of culture (described in Chapters 4 and 5) that resulted from New Order economic policies. These changes were also in conflict with the domesticated femininity of the New Order, which Brenner (1996) argues also influenced the move to veiling. Many Muslim women, including urban educated intellectuals, now choose to wear the *jilbab* as an expression of their Islamic identity—veiling per se is not the contentious issue. Hence, what began as a practice taken up volitionally by educated young women, and which functioned as a symbol of Islamic opposition to what was perceived as the corruption and social disorder of the New Order, has been adopted by an aspirational elite for whom women's dress and demeanour have become symbols of their moral authority. Many women regard the movement for the local implementation of sharia as an attempt by men to control women. A group of young women Islamic leaders who were visiting Australia in 2003, all wearing *jilbab*, expressed to me their anxiety concerning how far such regulations would go. For example, could Indonesia end up with a Bangladesh-type situation where the provisions of the Islamic criminal code on *zina* (unlawful sex) are used to punish women who have been raped?

The Islamized masculinity that asserts control over women through restrictions on dress and movement and through championing male prerogative in the family is used by a (mainly male) political elite pursuing power in the public domain, utilizing a variant on the ideological frame that expressed the patriarchal authority of the New Order. Power is exercised by often violent regulation of women's behaviour, and at the ideological level, championing 'Islam' through controlling women is an effective popular front strategy by Islamic parties that have not been able to win control of government, but also as an electoral strategy by secular nationalists who have won control in newly empowered districts (Bush 2008).

In several districts in West Java (including Cianjur and Tasikmalaya) and South Sulawesi (including Bulukumba), female civil servants and some private-sector workers such as bank employees have been instructed to wear the *jilbab* to work (Satriyo 2003). It has also been legislated for schoolgirls in many places. Other districts have regulations preventing men and women mixing in entertainment venues. In a number of places (for example Jakarta, Kendal in Central Java) regional regulations state only household heads are eligible to join the local government council (BPD), remembering that the 1974 Marriage Law

legislates that men are household heads. In West Sumatra—the home of the matrilineal Minangkabau—the regional government introduced draft legislation in 2001 on the 'Banning and Eradication of Immoral Behaviour' (Ranperda Pemberantasan Maksiat), ostensibly to curb prostitution. 'All women are forbidden to be outside their homes from 22:00 hours until 4:00, unless accompanied by *muhrim* [non-marriageable male kin] and/or engaged in an activity allowed in law.' (Pasal 10 Ayat 3) (*Kompas*, 6 August 2001). The draft regulation also established a dress code for women, banning 'miniskirts, sleeveless shirts and tight clothing that men might find sexually arousing' (Noerdin 2002: 183).

The draft code was strongly opposed by the women traders who dominate local markets. The 4 a.m. start would restrict them from their work. Why did the government not support their economic endeavours? Why should women be made responsible for men's inappropriate behaviour? The head of the Women's Studies Centre at the local state university (Universitas Andalas), Professor Sjahridal Dahlan, reported that the province has the highest proportion of female-headed households in the nation and the legislation would restrict their ability to support their families (*Kompas*, 6 August 2001). Some 'wags' asked how in practice would the enforcers determine who was a *muhrim*? Would it give rise to 'rent-a-*muhrim*' or (in an apparent play on the surveillance polices of the New Order where prospective civil servants needed a letter certifying they had no communist connections) 'letters certifying a *muhrim* (*surat keterangan muhrim)*'? (*Kompas*, 6 August 2001; Robinson 2004). Several commentators, including the Minang politician Hj Aisyah Amini (a member of the PPP), pointed out that if the government really was concerned to get rid of *maksiat* (immoral behaviour: prostitution, gambling and drinking), they should enforce the existing regulations in the criminal code.

The local legislature (DPRD) did not reply to its critics—but it did back down (Satriyo 2003). There was also criticism of *perda* from Riau, which targeted prostitutes, *inter alia* on the grounds that the regulations did not acknowledge that women may be trafficked women, sex workers against their will. Also, the regulation failed to identify male clients as morally flawed and in need of rehabilitation (*Kompas*, 13 August 2001) (see also Chapter 5). In 2003, the West Sumatra legislature was in the news again, with a further anti-woman regulation—a new law relating to the use of common property land (uncultivated land or *tanah ulayat*)—that, it was argued, would victimize women. Common property (*tanah ulayat*) is a woman's issue, because for the Minangkabau (the dominant ethnic group in West Sumatra) inheritance is matrilineal. The Bundo Kanduang (senior women of the descent group) played an important role in the control and transmission of land. The proposed regulation did not acknowledge the role of women in exploiting resources as owners of the *tanah ulayat*. Local NGOs were critical that: 'In the [draft] regulation, the *mamak kepala waris* (mother's brother who is head of the heirs) were acknowledged as the holders of rights in *tanah ulayat*'. According to Minangkabau custom (*adat*), the women as *bundo kanduang* (female elders) should be involved in making decisions about new regulations and the legislature was criticised for not consulting

them. In fact, neither women's NGOs nor the Adat Bundo Kanduang were consulted on the proposed land regulations. This case exemplifies the problem of assuming that regional autonomy will allow an unproblematic expression of *adat*. Power differences at the local level are expressed through new political forms. These include gender inequalities, shown very clearly in this case where women's rights in a matrilineal system are being threatened. A member of one West Sumatran women's organization commented: 'Even though this is the Reform era, the pattern from the New Order is still with us. If during the New Order women were pushed aside/marginalized, there is not much difference now'. Women's interests were able to be marginalized, because there were only five women members to 49 men in the local parliament (DPRD). Women placed banners on strategic crossroads in the provincial capital Padang that read 'there is no democracy without women' (www.kompas.com 2 June 2000). The language in which the *perda SI* are presented usually invokes 'tradition'—but these laws represent 'invented traditions'. Local regulations based on sharia cannot be seen as the revitalization of tradition, because sharia has never been the exclusive basis of everyday social practice in Indonesia.[7] Local communities commonly cannot differentiate between local custom and Islamic practice, as they have become seamlessly interwoven as Islam was accommodated. In many local communities, they assume they are already living according to sharia, although the new fundamentalists would see much of their everyday religious rituals as exhibiting *bidah*, or innovation (for example, some of the marriage practices discussed in Chapter 1). In many places, the proponents of sharia are being challenged by groups acting in the name of *adat* who want to implement a differing set of regulations based on what they argue are local cultural traditions. The *jilbab*, which figures prominently in local regulations, is a relatively recent practice: in places where head covering has become customary, Indonesian women more usually wore the *kerudung* or headscarf, draped loosely over their heads. The restrictions on women's movement are in contradiction to the historic involvement of women in economic activities outside the home, including in the markets in many areas—as noted above in West Sumatra. The passage of *perda* purportedly based on sharia reached a peak in 2004, but by 2007, no new rules of this type had been enacted (Bush 2008). Bush noted that in recent years, it has been principally regional governments and local leaders who are affiliated with the secular nationalist party Golkar, not one of the Isamist parties, which have enacted such regulations, perhaps suggesting the motive is attracting votes rather than expressing Islamic values.

The debate continues on the political front with the enactment of *perda*, and on the religious front with a battle over doctrinal interpretation. Liberal scholars point out the difficulty of deciding which *mazhab* (school of jurisprudence) to apply, and how to choose between competing interpretations within a *mazhab*, if one is wishing to use Islamic doctrine as a binding law, rather than as 'advice'. Many scholars hold that an interpretation is just that, and reject that an interpretation can have the force of law: true compliance with doctrinal prescriptions cannot be forced. Such action has no virtue, as proper and correct behaviour

must come from within. Many Islamic feminist women, who as individuals choose to wear the *jilbab* as a matter of expression of Muslim identity and of piety, are opposed to state-based forms of compulsion, especially when their enactment can incite violence and discrimination against women. Islam is providing a ground on which the terms of gendered power are being fought out, in the symbolic, political and even economic dimensions of gender.

Contemporary reinvigoration of Islamic practices focused on women's dress and demeanour are commonly interpreted as a resurgence of Islamic 'traditionalism' (Islam assumed to be an inherently conservative religion) and a refusal of modernity, including a refusal of the emancipatory possibilities that modernity opens up for women. However, since the turn of the twentieth century, there has been an Islamic discourse 'about "progress" the compatibility between Islam and modernism' (Kandiyoti 1991b: 239). The positions adopted by contemporary Islamic feminists on veiling indicate that it cannot be immediately read as a practice supporting Islamic patriarchy. The current quest by some groups to use control of the state apparatus to enforce sharia in personal status codes is a paradoxical reaction to the success of Indonesian feminists in establishing a role for the state in the regulation of family relationships and personal status, a form of state intervention that has been resisted in many Muslim societies (see Kandiyoti 1991b).

## The polygamy wars

Women's rights in marriage, especially their opposition to arbitrary divorce and polygamy, were major concerns of the early Indonesian women's movements, and marriage law reform has been one of their successes in the independent Indonesian nation. In the freer political climate of Reformasi, men who had never accepted legal restrictions on their prerogatives have been publicly defending their right to have multiple spouses. While Indonesia may have achieved a milestone for women in the election of a female president, after Abdurrachman Wahid was forced to step down (when his support from a coalition of Muslim parties collapsed) Megawati Sukarnoputi chose as her vice-president Hamzah Haz, the head of PPP the largest Muslim party in parliament (PPP was the Islamic party created under the New Order). Soon after his inauguration, Hamzah Haz was commonly announced on television news broadcasts as attending functions 'with his second wife'. He took a third wife while in office. This was a dramatic paradigm shift from the New Order position that made anything but monogamous marriage all but impossible for government officials, to public acceptance of the polygamous marriage of one of the two leading citizens. The legitimacy thus given to polygamy was keenly felt by women, including those from Muslim organisations. Many were critical of President Megawati's silent acceptance of Hamzah's very public polygamy. A female politician from an Islamic party pointed out to me that he required a battalion to provide security for his numerous domestic establishments in several cities—in her view a large drain on the public purse. Women point out that

Megawati's mother moved out of the presidential palace when her own father took a second wife (see Chapter 2). Hamza's polygamy gave courage to other polygamists, who began arguing for a revisiting of the 1974 Marriage Law, which had not outlawed polygamy but introduced regulations that made it difficult.

The most spectacular push by the pro-polygamy group has been the institution of the 'Polygamy Awards' by a well-known restaurateur, Haji Puspo Wardoyo, the self-styled president of Masyarakat Poligami Indonesia, or the Indonesian People's Association for Polygamy (see White 2006: 344–7). In July 2003, he hired a luxury venue and hosted a night of celebrations at which he presented awards to high-profile polygamists. He sent out hundreds of entry forms but only 50 were returned, which he argued was an indication that many men still felt embarrassed to join in such an event. Their excuses included their status as civil servants and their fear of their wives. Presumably many of them were among those who practised polygamy in a clandestine manner. Hamzah Haz was an awardee but declined to attend (Brenner 1996; Robinson 2004).

Puspo's extravagant gesture attracted a lot of media debate. His public campaign gave heart and a public voice to a conservative male group who wanted to revisit the 1974 Marriage Law in order to reinstate male prerogatives in divorce and polygamy. Puspo was quoted in the news magazine *Detik*: 'I know a lot of men who are embarrassed and keep secret the fact they have more than one wife. In fact, Islam allows polygamy, as long as you are just'. He declared his intention in establishing the awards was to give spirit (s*emangat*) and a moral boost to practitioners of polygamy. 'What they are doing is in fact noble (*mulia*)'. In another interview he proclaimed: 'A man who has the material wealth and who is of moral character has the duty of taking more than one wife. Polygamy represents the best form of action. If a man has these attributes, he should be polygamous. If all big businessmen in Indonesia follow [my advice], if there are 20 million successful businessmen who are able to take a second wife, they can support 40 million women. So the problem of women overseas workers will be resolved, and it will bring prosperity to many women' (*Kompas*, 28 July 2003). He argued that legalized polygamy benefits women, as the alternative is that they are kept as secret '*simpinan*' (woman on the side) with no legal rights for themselves or their children.

His campaign sparked outrage and protests from women's groups, which had long been arguing for a revision of the 1974 Marriage Law to outlaw the practice. As Minister for Women's Empowerment, Khofifah Indar Parawansa had put it on her list of discriminatory laws to be reformed. As a wealthy man, Puspo Wardoyo had been able to orchestrate a media campaign to promote his views. In a Yogyakarta protest organized by the Pro-woman Alliance for Justice against 'the recent flowering of polygamy', the organizers problematized the legal status of polygamy, arguing it contradicted Indonesia's obligations as a signatory to CEDAW, and indeed the CEDAW (1998) committee had criticized the discriminatory clauses of the 1974 law. They pointed to the irony that 25 July, the date for the inaugural Polygamy Awards was the nineteenth anniversary of Indonesia's ratification of CEDAW. Puspo Wardoyo was using religion

to legitimate a practice that was a form of violence against women, and to bring respectability to a covert practice for elite men under the New Order: young women sexual playmates and 'trophy wives' symbolizing male wealth and power (see Robinson 2004). On the night of the Polygamy Awards, women demonstrated outside the venue, a luxury hotel in Jakarta (*Kompas*, 28 July 2003) and some gained entry to the hall.

Newspapers reported that most of the protestors in Yogyakarta were wearing the *jilbab*, and were carrying banners and posters with slogans such as: 'Polygamy Transgresses Human Rights' or 'Refuse Polygamy'.

This contemporary campaign drew public support for prominent Muslim women, in contrast to the pre-colonial conflict within the women's movement over polygamy. The Muslim feminist scholar Siti Musdah Mulia (2005a) published a booklet entitled *Islam Menggugat Poligami* (Islam Reproaches Polygamy) that brought together many of the arguments that were put forward in opposition to Puspo Wadoyo's campaign. Islam did not endorse polygamy that was a way of satisfying lust.

The women's legal advocacy centre LBH APIK came out strongly in opposition to polygamy, which they argued was a violent and discriminatory practice of one group towards another on the basis of sex. They too argued that as a signatory to CEDAW, the government has a responsibility to protect women from all forms of discrimination in the home and in the wider world. For LBH APIK, polygamy constitutes a form of discrimination against women, based on an assumption of male superiority and male sexual privilege which is hence in contradiction with principles of equality and anti-discrimination in many legal instruments (UUD 45; UUHAM, UU No1/84, GBHN1999, Deklarasi Penghapusan Kekerasan Terhadap Perempuan).

They continued by arguing that the clauses in the marriage law permitting polygamy express a view that the purpose of marriage is to satisfy the biological sexual needs and the need for an heir of members of one sex only; a 'phallocentric' point of view that assumes the role of women is to provide sexual gratification and male heirs. Polygamy manifests a construction of male power as superior and a desire to dominate women, and biological/sexual factors influence its standing. LBH APIK drew on their own case files to argue that polygamy was harmful to both first and second wives: many cases of polygamy trigger domestic violence as well as physical, psychological, sexual and economic violence. Polygamy itself constitutes a form of domestic violence which is legitimated both by law and by custom. According to LBH APIK, polygamy is the most common reason for women to petition for divorce (Robinson 2004).

As a political issue, polygamy did not simply divide men and women. Several women entered the debate proclaiming themselves to be pro-polygamy, some of them appearing on public platforms with Puspo Wardoyo. Sitoresmi Prabuningrat, the second wife of singer Debby Nasution, declared she was happy as a second wife, although she knew this was controversial because most people saw it as a mark of social stigma. Rather than polygamy being the

practice of the poorly educated, not popular among women who had a modern outlook, she argued that it was precisely, because she was a second wife that she was able to be a 'career woman': 'If I were a sole wife, who would look after my husband?'

The issue has divided devout Muslims, even Islamic scholars. Not only women argue for a textual interpretation of the Qur'an which supports a prohibition on polygamy: many devout men also share this view. For example, in 2001 the Islamic scholar Nasaruddin Umar addressed a seminar on gender equity organized by the Islamic women's rights group Rahima on the interpretation of Sura An Nisa *ayat* 3 on polygamy. Although it states a man may marry up to four times, many *ulama* reject that this provides a basis for polygamy for the following reasons. Islam fundamentally affirms monogamous marriage, and accepts polygamy as an Arab tradition from the period prior to Islam in which men had primary status and dominance. The cultural and historical biases in interpreting that particular *ayat* in many classic texts is the reason polygamy is still practised in many Arab countries. Even though the prophet Muhammad was polygamous, it cannot be used as an excuse by the *ummat* to support the practice because it was a special prerogative of the Prophet, and related to the specific historical circumstances of his time. He used it in the course of *dakwah* (proselytizing, disseminating his beliefs), to protect orphans of men who died in war, to strengthen his associations, to prevent ethnic conflict and to attract a particular ethnic group to convert to Islam. Out of his nine wives, only two were virgins. Most of them were widows and already menopausal.[8]

Other anti-polygamy arguments based on religion question the possibility of ordinary men obeying the injunction to treat all wives equally and the impropriety of marrying polygamously for sexual satisfaction. Despite Puspo Wardoyo's attempt to inject economic rationality and high morality into his justification, a common assumption in Indonesia is that men take second and subsequent wives to satisfy lust, and in such circumstances they are likely to forget their obligations to first wives and their children. This was graphically illustrated to me in an incident in Soroako where I witnessed two co-wives fighting over property. The second wife, who had inherited the property from her mother, said to me with high cynicism: 'Let's just cut his penis in two and have half each'.

Puspo's chain of restaurants now serves 'polygamy juice' blended from four different flavours, symbolically linking polygamy with pleasure through variety in sexual partners. This symbol of polygamy undercuts his argument for polygamy as 'civic duty', rather than an expression of male lust satisfied through multiple partners. In a religious forum attended by Puspo Wardoyo in Semarang in September 2003, one woman speaker, Hj Munawoh, argued that even polygamous men reject the benefit of polygamy for their children. She had asked her polygamous father, with ten daughters, if he would agree to his daughters undertaking a polygamous marriage, and he replied 'Don't! . . . Women in polygamous marriages are certain to suffer spiritually (*batin*)' (Robinson 2004).

In another high-profile case, the popular television preacher Aa Gym (see Watson 2005) made a polygamous marriage in 2006. Street protests, mainly by women opposing his action, were followed by demonstrations supporting him, attended mainly by men. His appeal to viewers, and his highly profitable enterprise selling merchandise, was damaged, as his following came principally from women and girls.

The most radical textual critique of polygamy has come from Siti Musdah Mulia. In addition to publishing her booklet entitled *Islam Menggugat Polygami* (Islam Reproaches Polygamy) in 2005, she is also the principal author of a 'counter-legal draft', which aimed to revise perceived discriminatory clauses of the 1974 Marriage Law. The most controversial of the recommended changes related to support for interfaith marriage and the outlawing of polygamy (White 2006: 348–52). In 2004, the draft law failed to gain support in the parliament. According to some commentators, Siti Musdah Mulia and supporters—the proponents of the draft bill—lacked the organization of the proponents of the contemporaneous and successful campaign to introduce a bill outlawing domestic violence.

In 2007, a Jakarta entrepreneur, M. Insa, petitioned the Constitutional Court for a judicial review of the state restrictions on polygamy, arguing that it reduced his right to freedom of worship guaranteed by the Constitution. The court did not find in his favour, arguing that the legal position, that the principle of marriage is monogamy and that polygamy only be allowed 'with certain reasons, conditions and procedures' is not in conflict with Islamic teachings. In their judgement, they cited supporting statements to this effect from M. Quraish Shihab, a prominent Muslim scholar, who has argued for textual interpretations that support women's rights. He stated that 'polygamy is an exception which can be sought under certain circumstances' relating to objective conditions and subjective factors. He argued that according to Islamic teachings, the objective of marriage is serenity (*sakinah*) and this enjoins spouses to give happiness to each other and avoid 'egoism'. Thus, the wife's consent for polygamy is necessary and consistent with Islam. In addition, the wife is an 'equal partner' whose 'status and dignity must be respected'. (http://www.mahkamahkonstitusi.go.id/eng/berita.php?newscode=458; accessed 5/11/07).

## The battle for women's bodies

How do we explain this new terrain of battle over gender relations? A number of complex national and international events have coalesced to create the space for its emergence. The genie of Islamism has been let out of the bottle with Reformasi. Where the New Order had previously kept a tight reign on global Islamic currents, for example restricting information from Iran during the Ayatollah revolution (Jones 1980), the door is now open. There is an incentive for Islamist parties to develop their distinctive 'brand' in the new freedom of electoral politics, but politicians from secular nationalist parties have also seized the opportunity to capture Islamic votes with policies such as the *perda SI.*

Global Islam is now a 'brand' to compete in terms of legitimacy with 'the West'. The organization Hizbut Tahrir (HT) for example eschews participation in electoral politics, but they seek to influence political debate with extra-parliamentary political action.

Simultaneously, the demise of the authoritarian regime and the new climate of openness has created scope for women to make political gains. Wins have included the outlawing of domestic violence and the recognition of rape in marriage, the electoral quota, and the visible symbol of a woman president. Women's rights to abortion are being championed in a draft revised law on health (with strong support from Fatayat NU). These changes unsettle the 'patriarchal dividend', the power of men over women in public and private institutions already under threat from New Order economic policies that saw women taking on expanded economic roles, including in industrial employment and international migration. Puspo Wardoyo's rhetoric particularly focuses on polygamy as a 'solution' to women's overseas migration. The rhetoric of democracy allows little space for reclaiming masculine prerogative, but conservative interpretations of Islam provide a theological rationale for male privilege.

The assertion of male power through an Islamic rationale has been most evident in struggles in 2005–2006 over a bill outlawing *pornografi* and *pornoaksi*: the latter term a neologism referring to producers or perpetrators of pornographic acts. A bill that had been first drafted by the Department of Religious Affairs in the 1990s was taken up again in the 2004 parliament, with expanded terms beyond the production and distribution of pornographic media (see Allen 2007). Especially controversial clauses placed restrictions on women's dress, movements and demeanour. The moderate Islamic parties like PKB were effectively 'wedged' by hard line groups, and groups operating outside the realm of formal politics like HT, and gave support to the bill. In a clever move, the more Islamist groups, including HT, PPP and PKS, managed a swell of populist support outside the parliament to gain support for their minority political agenda within the legislature. Supporters of gender equity organized very effectively outside parliament to oppose it. A mass street demonstration on International Women's Day in 2006 was followed by a large street demonstration by radical Muslim groups in support of the bill (Chandrakirana 2006). Supporters and opponents were not easily categorized—Fatayat NU, for example, opposed the bill on the grounds that it was aimed at 'domesticating' women, while other sections of NU supported it (Allen 2007: 104). Nationalist and non-Muslim groups saw it as a covert attempt (like *perda SI*) to introduce Islamic law. The populist strategy, to capture the legislative agenda to promote a conservative gender agenda tied to a masculine supremacy with its roots in Islam, was ultimately unsuccessful, and in 2007 the bill went back to the parliamentary committee.

## Islamic feminism

Men with a conservative agenda, who claim power over women in the name of Islam, and who seek to stifle the political gains women have made in the context

of Reformasi, are not the only group to embrace currents of global Islam. Women, too, have benefited from the interpretive positions of radical female thinkers, like Fatimah Mernissi and Riffat Hassan and (closer to home) Sisters in Islam in Malaysia (Robinson 2008).

These women utilize Islam to challenge the interpretive stances that are hostile to women's interests, and seek to achieve or sustain control over women. The Indonesian Islamic scholar Lily Munir (2002) regards Fatimah Mernissi and Riffat Hassan as 'opening our eyes to misogyny in Muslim societies'. In recent years in Indonesia, there has been a growing range of religious-based texts in Indonesia's bookstores, and translated works of Islamic feminist figures appear alongside more conservative texts concerned with female piety (see Robinson 2008). The fundamental argument in Islamic feminist writing is that discriminative practices arise from gender-biased interpretation of the Qur'an and *hadith* that are in contradiction with the true egalitarian spirit of Islam. In finding the roots of gender equity in Islam, the flood of new Islamic literature exemplifies the cosmopolitan character of Islamic social and political thought as a counterpoint and complement to Western thinking (Robinson 2008).

New Muslim women's groups are emerging that endeavour to produce less gender-biased and discriminatory interpretations of religious texts (Sciortino et al. 1996; Marcoes 2002: 193). For example, in 1997, a group of women, mainly graduates of IAIN, established Forum Kajian Kitab Klasik (Forum for the Study of Classical Islamic Texts) with an aim to 'formulate less gender-biased and more just interpretations of classical Islamic texts as they pertain to the rights and responsibilities of women' (Marcoes 2002: 194). They are critiquing the gender implications of the classical texts (Kitab Kuning) originating in the Middle East that are the basis of the *pesantren* (Islamic residential school) curriculum.

Lili Munir (2002) discusses the 'classical exegesis' of Sura An Nisa 4: 34 which proclaims that men have authority over women. Her argument exemplifies the interpretive strategy which is used by women Islamic scholars who are well-educated in the *pesantren* tradition and so able to challenge misogynist interpretations. She comments:

> If these Qur'anic verses were so discriminatory against women, then how do they relate to the overarching message of the Qur'an that it is God's will for humanity to create a just society and institute a variety of social reforms, including raising the status of women? The Qur'an speaks of its own mission as 'to bring mercy for all creatures' (QS al Hujarat 49: 13) (Munir 2002: 209).

She cites a number of verses that enjoin equality between men and women 'in all essential rights and duties' (Munir 2002: 210). Munir (ibid.: 213) poses the question: 'Have God's messages on gender and sexual equality been properly understood by the human? Is our understanding of the Qur'an in line with what God intends to express?'.

Nasaruddin Umar argues that much misunderstanding arises because of problems with the Indonesian translation of the Qur'an. He attends to technical issues of grammar and phonology to argue for more gender equitable terms which he says are also more authentic. For example, he argues that the term '*quawwam*', usually glossed in Indonesian as '*pemimpin*' (leader), should more correctly be translated as *pembina* or protector/guide (Umar 2001; and see White 2006: 289); that is, it does not support a hierarchical relationship of men over women. Other discussions on this term consider whether it only applies to relationships within the household, and if it can legitimately be extended to the public sphere. Siti Musdah Mulia (2005b) uses her accomplishments as one of Indonesia's senior women religious scholars to pose a radical challenge to male prerogative. She also deconstructs the term '*quawwam*', arguing that it has the sense of protector of the family and household (ibid.: 142), not the conferring of patriarchal authority. Even more radical is her argument that the fundamental commitment of Islam to gender equity can be located in the central concept of Tauhid, or unity of God, because this doctrine renders all unequal social relationships (like master–slave) illegitimate, since the dominant partner positions themselves as a god to the dominated (ibid.) (see Robinson 2008).[9]

While Muslim scholars such as Lily Munir, Siti Musdah Mulia and Lies Marcoes argue against conservative changes from within Islam, other activists have chosen to challenge the threat to gender equity in secular terms. Edriana Noerdin (2002), who is a member of the NGO Kapal Perempuan, uses human rights discourse to challenge the proposed sharia regulations and advocates that women engage in secular politics, for example, attempting to influence the revision of the Regional Autonomy Law (Law No. 22/1999) so that it gives women more decision-making power (ibid.: 186). In the case of polygamy, activists (such as LBH APIK) use the legal status of international human rights instruments in pressing their case.

## Women in Islamic political parties and social organizations

The major Islamic parties have had women's sections for many years and have high-profile women members. As noted in Chapter 2, in colonial times, while the Islamic women's organizations were troubled by the demand to outlaw polygamy, many individual members supported the curbing of male prerogative in polygamy and in divorce. The argument has long been heard from Muslim women that Islam supports gender equity, for example the argument made by Mangunposito of the Muslim party Masjumi to the 1950s Konstituante (Constitutional Assembly) to improve on the rights of women guaranteed in the 1950 Constitution by looking to the Qur'an (Nasution 1992: 222). For her, it was other social and cultural elements of the varied cultures of the archipelago that led to the lower position of women: Islam would guarantee equality. However, most of the discussion on Islam and gender in the Konstituante referred to the vexed issue of family law. Islam was seen as primarily influencing women's

position in the family, not their right to participate in public life, which was supported by Islamic groups like NU. (This position appeared to have changed in the discussions about the candidature of Megawati Sukarnoputri for president.) The woman's organizations affiliated with major Islamic groups have large memberships. For example, as we saw earlier in this volume, the NU-affiliated women's organizations, Muslimat and Fatayat, had around 10 million members in 2002. Muslimat and Fatayat are independent organizations. Aisyiyah Muhamadiyah is still subordinate to the central body of Muhamadiyah. The new Islamist parties like PKS also have women's sections. PKS in many ways has a conservative gender agenda, but it has very active female cadres, and easily achieved the 30 per cent quota of female candidates in 2004, for example.

There are also new independent Islamic organizations for women that seek to address contemporary issues such as 'domestic and public violence, reproductive health, political rights and equal access to economic means' (Marcoes 2002: 193). They are united by a concern with 'women's empowerment and the advocacy of women's rights within the context of Islamic teachings' (ibid.), through strategies involving both direct social engagement, and the hermeneutic interpretations of texts, discussed above. Sinta Nuriyah Abdurrahman, a prominent Islamic feminist in her own right and wife of former president Abdurrahman Wahid, formed PUAN (Puan Amal Hayati) in 1999. It aims to reduce violence against women through an educational programme in *pesantren*, where Indonesia's Islamic leaders are trained. Another new organization is Rahima (the Arabic word for 'womb'), established with Ford Foundation funding to monitor the implementation of sharia and gender-discriminatory regulations in rural areas. Its male and female staff are fully located within the Islamic tradition but embrace a gender equity and human rights perspective. (For example, they broke away from another Islamic organization with a gender equity perspective when one of the leaders contracted a polygamous marriage.) They have devised a strategy to take gender-sensitive interpretations of Islamic teachings to a mass base through their practice of Salawat Jender. Salawat are a popular expression of religious devotion, joyful singing in praise of the Prophet. Rahima have found Qur'anic verses in support of gender equity that they sing in this genre and they have been popularized through the mass organization Fatayat NU, and received support from *kiai* (Robinson 2008).

Lies Marcoes (2002) comments that many former Islamic social organizations have become political organizations in Reformasi, and there is a 'growing political power of Islamic groups' as figures such as Amien Rais (speaker of the MPR) and Abdurrahman Wahid assume prominence. Islamic parties are producing some female politicians, though in the 2004 legislative elections, none of the parties gave women candidates strong support. Khofifah Indar Parawansa held the important position of campaign manager for PKB (the party associated with NU), and she was touted as a vice-presidential candidate in the 'horse-trading' before the candidates were announced. However, the major Islamic

organizations NU and Muhammadiyah do not have many women in leadership positions. A request from within NU to appoint women to leadership in the Pengurus Besar NU (NU central board) was rejected on the grounds that women should stay in the women's domain and this was provided by MNU and Fatayat, the exclusively women's organizations. In what Lies Marcoes (2002: 193) calls a 'small but meaningful step', a woman feminist scholar, Sri Ruhaini Dzuhayatin, was appointed as the head of the Muhammadiyah Marjlis Tarjih (The Assembly for Decisions on Islamic Law, the body that issues *fatwa* in Muhammadiyah) in 1995. This was implemented on the grounds that it made it more probable that the decisions of Muhammadiyah would encompass a gender perspective (Viviani 2001: 3). According to Viviani, the Islamic students' organizations are even more limited in their ability to encompass women in leadership. (The larger organizations have a number of older, more experienced Islamic feminist thinkers and activists, perhaps—people like Lily Munir, Lies Marcoes and Khofifah Indar Parawansa in NU and its women's organizations, and Sri Ruhaini Dzuhayatin in Muhammadiyah.) The task of 'reconstruction' of Indonesian Islam and the promotion of a gender-sensitive interpretation has not just been taken up by women. Several male Islamic intellectuals like Nasaruddin Umar (mentioned earlier), M. Quraish Shihab, Faquihuddin Abdul Kodir, Masdar Farid Mas'udi (the head of the group P3M that has conducted important research on gender relations and courses on gender perspectives in *pesantren* in Java and Madura) and Syafiq Hasyim (from Rahima and the author of *Hal-hal yang tak Terpikirkan dalam Fikih Perempuan*) have been significant intellectual figures in the movement (Viviani 2001: 5). Their work complements that of the female scholars. These positions are supported within sections of NU and also the Jaringan Islam Liberal (JIL)—a group committed to democratic and liberal interpretations of Islam.

This is not to say that there is a unified position by educated middle-class Muslim women on gender issues. As previously noted, some women have come out publicly in favour of polygamy and also there was a well-publicized book by Ratna Megawangi (1999) that used Islam to justify a position borrowed from the radical anti-feminist right in the USA. Megawangi had been a student at Temple University and her bibliography and position reflect the influence of the Christian right. She argues for gender difference based on Islamic texts and berates feminism for what she says is an attempt to erode difference. Like the Christian anti-feminists, she confuses the issues of equity and identity, deliberately failing to recognize the possibility of an idea of difference that does not imply hierarchy, as is espoused by 'difference' feminism. The student organizations, Lembaga Dakwah Kampus (LDK) in many of the major universities (UI, ITB, UGM, etc.) reject a feminist position on the grounds that it originates in the West, all of whose products must be rejected. Viviani (2001: 6) quotes a female LDK member at UI: 'We accept that men are the leaders [*pemimpin*] of women'. Like Megawangi, they emphasize the primary role of women in the family, a foundation of a Muslim society (ibid.).

## Conclusion

Islam as a newly empowered political force has brought some threatening challenges to Indonesian women:

> The struggle of Muslim women for liberation has become one, if not the most apparent symbol of Islam's problematic position, as it struggles both to protect its traditions and adjust to the challenges of modern times (Platzdasch 2000: 336).

The attempt by a group of men in the political elite to use textual interpretations to lock women out of public life challenges the agenda of activist women to increase the sphere of influence of women in decision-making (*pengambilan keputusan*) and in public life generally. The effects of this conservative move have been most strongly felt at the district level of politics. The anti-*maksiat* laws make women responsible for prostitution, valorizing female chastity and women as bearers of social honour (while ignoring the role of the lust of male customers) and the quest to re-instate polygamy legitimizes male desire as a strand of hegemonic masculinity. However, within the political elite, their view has not gone unchallenged. The expansion of Islamic education under the Suharto regime benefited women as well as men, and women have been able to challenge anti-woman textual interpretations of Islamic doctrine. In addition, there are many male Islamic intellectuals who embrace a human rights perspective and challenge misogynist positions. The pro-women positions are opposed by those with a more 'fundamentalist' approach. But many would argue that Islam is an inherently pluralistic religion: it does not have a hierarchy as in, say, the Roman Catholic Church. Hence we should not be surprised to see contestation and difference, and a range of Islamic positions on gender issues from radical to conservative. Making this point, Viviani (2001: 6) further argues (citing Laela Ahmad) that ideological positions are necessarily shifting as they arise in the context of the circumstances of the historical moment. The most alarming feature of the political movement grouped around the demand for the use of Islam in the regulation of personal life is the manner in which the actions of elites have legitimated harassment of women in public spaces, through measures such as the *razia jilbab* (*jilbab* raids). However, women are claiming a place in the public arena and Islamic organizations are providing one avenue for this.

In the arena of formal politics, women's groups associated with the major Islamic parties are thriving. Women have assumed important positions in both Islamic social organizations and Islamic parties, building on the basis established in the pre-independence period (see Chapter 2). The 2004 parliamentary elections would, prima facie, indicate a lack of popular support for the implementation of sharia as the regulatory basis of everyday affairs: the parties (like PBB) that campaigned on this platform did not perform well (PBB only received 3 per cent of votes and failed to meet the threshold to contest the presidential elections). Other Islamic parties known to favour the policy did not use it in their

campaign (for example PKS, PPP). The presidential elections in July 2004 saw the Muslim party candidates Amien Rais and Hamzah Haz performing poorly. (They are both known to have at one time favoured the implementation of sharia, but they did not campaign on the issue.) The only female candidate (Megawati Sukarnoputri) gained sufficient support to contest the final round. As noted in the previous chapter, many female candidates polled well in the legislative elections but did not win seats due to their unfavourable positions on party lists. This would seem to indicate that being female is not inherently an obstacle to assuming public office, while at the same time male politicians do use the issue of the sex of the candidate in an attempt to discredit their rivals' claims. Kandiyoti (1991b: 239) comments that: 'Studies of women in Muslim societies have tended to neglect the role of the state and the extent to which the place of Islam, itself, is mediated through various aspects of state practices'. Gender relations are also mediated through state practices. In the Reform era, the patriarchal forms of gender symbolism and gender power of the New Order are being challenged, while Islamic-based forms of gender symbolism and gender power are arising to take their place and challenge women's rights in the domestic sphere, civil society and the state. However, Islamic feminists are also able to use Islam as a powerful force for a counter-gender symbolism and rights discourse, asserting their rights to an equal place with men in a society expressing Muslim ideals.

# Conclusion

Gender equity is a foundation of a democratic polity: a central argument of this book is that gender politics is not a sideshow to the 'main games' of the anti-colonial struggle or the power shifts and turns connected to the political development of the Indonesian nation. A gender relations perspective has been crucial to developing this argument. Women have been pivotal players in unfolding political scenarios, and gender inequalities and ideologies have been central to sustaining the exercise of political and economic power by a male-dominated elite.

Throughout this book, we have seen the ways in which gender practices are reshaped by forces that can be understood as a 'global gender order' connected with economic practices of global corporations, gender symbolism circulated by global media and population movements, and new forms of emotional relationships and sexuality linked to mass use of contraception and international migration and travel. Also significant is the global impact of policies as they are taken up by nation states, such as economic restructuring and privatization of government services, as well as the international coordination of 'masculinized military, paramilitary and police institutions' (Connell 2002: 110). The political agendas of international organizations help form 'democratic space' for struggles for gender equity.

The state is a crucial arena for gendered power relations (Connell 2002: 103). Apart from its own gender regime which tends to exclude women from positions of power/authority, the state's policies also regulate gender relations in society, in the Indonesian case through the marriage law, policies on population and education, and through labour force regulation for example. The state has been proactive in constituting gender relations, including through defining male and female roles and responsibilities in the 1974 Marriage Law. Indonesian women have long acknowledged this important capacity of the state and since the early twentieth century, they have demanded regulations that would improve women's social power.

'State power is a resource for the struggle for hegemony in gender, and hegemonic masculinity is a resource in the struggle for state power' (Connell 2002: 105). Forms of masculinity have been a resource for political elites fighting to capture the Indonesian state, and a familial ideology of patriarchal

authority was a key tool for the authoritarian power exercised by the New Order. It also delivered a 'patriarchal dividend' to men in general, in their state-sanctioned roles as 'household heads'.

The New Order state ideology of *ibuism* (implying a primary identification for women with domestic roles of wife and mother) drew on elite models of seclusion of women in the home (which had been given succour by Islam), but it bore little relation to the long-standing economic realities of the lives of women across the archipelago or the importance of their roles in production to household well-being. However, this ideological agenda that mobilized women in the service of regime power is under challenge in the democratic space opened up by Reformasi and is unlikely to have an enduring impact on gender relations. The lasting legacy of the New Order will be more evident in the impact of economic policies, including the embrace of global economy and its attendant cultural flows, which have been accompanied by the emergence of new models of masculinity and femininity in personal and working life.

Light manufacturing of goods for the global market has recruited young female workers in vastly greater numbers than had been employed in the traditional domestic manufacturing sectors of *kretek* cigarettes and *batik* and other textiles. The expansion of education which was intended to improve Indonesia's 'human capital' benefited girls as well as boys, and the gap between female and male literacy has all but disappeared. Women are achieving educational levels almost equal to men. Whether as labourers in manufacturing industry, *warung* (small shop) operators or as overseas migrants, lower- and middle-class women have taken up the new economic opportunities consequent on New Order economic policies, even though the object of those initiatives was to increase male employment. Economic changes, especially those consequent on the embrace of global capital, have reconfigured crucial aspects of masculinity and femininity.

Labour migration has had profound effects on sending households. Male migration (often overseas) impacts on the economic activities of the women left behind, who take over total responsibility for the everyday needs of their households (a practice already common in many of the coastal communities of Indonesia where fishermen and sailors are frequently absent). The traditional economic roles of women have readily transmuted into the crucial roles they have assumed in the modern economy, and the patriarchal dividend ensuring male privilege at home has proven fragile. It is further challenged by the growing trend for women to migrate overseas, leaving husbands behind to be 'both father and mother' and to take over domestic chores.

Marriage has been a critical domain for the exercise of gendered power in Indonesia. Islamic conversion accommodated to the customary forms of conjugal relationships: in particular, Islamic law adapted to local conditions in recognition of common property rights and the strengthening of women's power within marriage through the practice of the *taklik talak* (provisional repudiation/divorce). The protection of women's rights vis-a-vis men has been a critical demand on the state by organized women's movements, and was one of the three resolutions

of the first all-Indonesian women's congress in 1928. There was a peculiar alignment of the long-standing women's demands and the New Order agenda in the promotion of monogamy which resulted in the passage of the 1974 Marriage Law. Power in marriage has been put on the political agenda in post-Reformasi Indonesia with a resurgence in male demands for their rights in polygamous marriage to be unfettered by the state. Women activists have responded by demanding that the state take stronger action to protect women's rights in marriage, for example, challenging the clauses allowing polygamy in the 1974 Marriage Law as in contradiction with CEDAW, to which Indonesia is a signatory.

The rationalizing economic imperatives of the New Order emphasized economic development as progress through a command structure that provided an always-ready work force. In this context, Indonesian women were enjoined to limit the number of births through use of contraceptives in a state programme that was marked by a lack of quality of care and by human rights abuses. In a related vein, the continuing high maternal mortality rates indicate a form of state violence against women and a lack of official concern for their rights as mothers. This abuse of women's reproductive rights has been a bridge between secular feminists and many Muslim women's groups, who have developed programmes to assist women in obtaining quality reproductive health services. The mass distribution of contraceptives has also transformed the way in which men and women are formed as sexual beings and the nature of emotional attachment characterizing adult social relationships. In one sign of this change, Indonesian youth—like youth all over the world—are experimenting with sex. This shift has been slowly officially acknowledged.

State violence, an important strand of the militarized hegemonic masculinity of the Suharto regime, has elicited a powerful anti-violence discourse, drawing women into public politics through disgust at state-sponsored violence. While the 'founding myth' of the sexualized violence of the Gerwani women was a foundation for militarized state control, the regime came unstuck in an instance of sexual terror. The tumultuous events of May 1998, and the reaction against the violence that the regime mobilized to shore up support—in particular the rape of Chinese Indonesian women as part of the scenario of scapegoating the Chinese for the nation's ills—have opened up a broadened public discourse on violence against women: what was once a subversive critique is now part of mainstream politics. The formation of Komnas Perempuan (National Commission on Violence against Women) by President Habibie symbolized the shift in discourse from 'public secret' to a head-on embrace of interpersonal and state violence. Media reports of anti-woman violence, including incest, are now a part of everyday news reporting. Anti-violence is a common theme in the demonstrations that now mark Indonesia's national days celebrating women (Hari Kartini and Hari Ibu) and International Women's Day. There are demands by women's groups for anti-violence legislation, including the successful outlawing of rape in marriage. Under Minister Khofifah, police stations were equipped with special rooms and procedures for rape victims, in an effort to minimize the

trauma associated with seeking justice. The legitimating myth of the violence of Gerwani women is being subjected to scrutiny and these women (many of them released after decades of incarceration) now speak publicly about their experience of violence at the hands of the regime.

The embrace by women activists of the Gerwani women, such as the appearance of S. K. Trimurti as the honoured guest at the 2001 Kartini Day celebrations, symbolizes the current pluralism of the women's movement:

> We are entering the third stage in the periodization of the history of the Indonesian women's movement. The first period is the pre-independence era, when the women's movement was integrated into the national politics of fighting against the colonial power. The second period was the last 32 years of Suharto's rule, when the women's movement was co-opted to be [part of the] ideological state apparatus. But even during this most repressive period, there were subversive forces in the women's movements, for example in the work of NGOs such as Kalyanamitra, that empowered themselves with necessary skills in advocating alternative perspectives. Now we are entering the third period when this underground subversive force comes to the surface and spreads all over the country. This third period also marks the pluralization of the woman's movement (Sadli 2005).[1]

These comments were made by the then head of Komnas Perempuan in a discussion organized by feminist academic Melani Budianta with a group of women human rights activists in 2000. They noted the efflorescence of women's organizations all over the country in the Reform period—some of them are new and others are long-established groups that are finding a new role for themselves in the post-Suharto era. Many of the organizations are based on religious activities, but have expanded into broader activities associated with human rights (for example, women's prayer groups intervening in local politics, Fatayat NU setting up women's refuges and PKK becoming Forum Warga [Citizen's Forums]). There are also new networks of women's organizations around issues such as violence, workers' rights and reproductive health.

Women constituted more than half the voters registered to vote in the 2004 elections, and while this voting power has not translated into women legislators, women's NGOs conducted a voter education campaign with support from the Menteri Pemberdayaan Perempuan. The women's ministry is showing a new capacity and willingness to be the focus of some of the demands, for example (in 2007), organizing an SMS lobbying campaign to demand that the 30 per cent quota for women candidates to become mandatory in the 2009 elections. Women parliamentarians have formed a women's caucus, and many unsuccessful candidates have vowed to work across party lines in order to strengthen their capacity to propose and evaluate legislation. While there are conflicts and divisions within the women's movement, there is also a strong consciousness of the need to organize and to push for legislation such as outlawing rape in marriage,

abolishing gender discriminatory legislation and having social policies that address women's needs, such as reproductive health. The newly pluralized women's movement is manifest in a great variety of political, religious and social organizations, and networks that organize them in 'transversal' political tactics. For many Indonesian women, their contemporary life experiences involve direct engagement with international economic and cultural forces. Their history of common struggle is a legacy that is embraced through their political action and cultural production in facing up to new challenges as masculinities regroup. Their political actions exemplify the social expression of gender as a 'series' (Young 1994)—people who occupy diverse cultural and class positions are 'hailed' by the category 'woman' as a basis for social action.

Decentralization of government functions is a strategy to redefine democracy in Indonesia, by bringing decision-makers closer to the people. It has also augmented a resurgence of local traditions and forms of political authority formerly effaced by the homogenizing imperatives of the New Order. In practice, regional autonomy has provided a platform for the assertion/assumption of power by local elites that has in many cases incorporated attempts to establish a new gender regime through the 'invention of tradition' in regard to women's roles such as restrictive dress codes and curfews. This is carried out in the name of sharia law. These moves are challenged by women, in terms of both Islamic discourse and secular ideas of human rights. The new emerging 'fronts' of gender politics in the context of decentralization exemplify the way in which gender relations are embedded in political contestation.

Feminist analyses of women's social participation challenge not only New Order models of State Ibuism, but also the emerging conservative agenda of Islamists for whom religious precepts are providing a basis for a reformulation of hegemonic masculinity. A common position among Indonesian feminists is an argument for women's difference, not using the New Order language of '*kodrat*' that ties them to a biologically determined destiny, but rather locating women's difference in their social experience of motherhood. In a position reminiscent of Carol Gilligan, they argue for the moral sensibility engendered in women by their position as bearers of life and as nurturers. This is the thinking underlying the successful political strategy of SIP. Their analysis acknowledges the critical role of women in household livelihoods, in contradiction to the official ideology of the New Order which organized female citizens in a manner that emphasized their domesticated femininity, their secondary status to men. Hermeneutic analysis of Islamic texts by male and female proponents support gender equity as a basic Muslim value.

The discourses circulating in the contemporary Indonesian women's movement exemplify the cosmopolitanism that has been a factor in Indonesia's history for the past millennium: both Islamic and Western discourses are used in political debates, including those in relation to gender (Robinson 2008). Islam is mobilized in the argument for women's rights as well as in denial of those rights, and many Islamic parties champion pro-women agendas and have given rise to effective female politicians.

The 'repressive developmentalist' (Feith 1980) Suharto regime relied on a militarized hegemonic masculinity in its forms of domination. In the current move to redefine the nature of Indonesian democracy, for some this involves a strengthening of the Islamic cast of the Indonesian state. There is an assertion of a masculinity rooted in a purported Islamic ideology which is a contender for an alternative hegemonic masculinity seeking the control of women and the domination of alternative masculinities. An alternative Islamic voice, linked closely with the distinctive cast of Indonesian Islam, challenges this conservative position through asserting Islam as a moral force that promises social equality and values social and religious pluralism. Gender relationships are at the heart of contemporary struggles over the direction of the Indonesian nation.

# Notes

## 1 Gender Diversity in Indonesia

1 *Kodrat* is derived from the Arabic term *kudra*, which in Winstedt's Malay dictionaries is glossed as 'power'.
2 The term '*kodrat pria*' is sometimes used but it does not have the official sanction nor is it as common as the idea of '*kodrat wanita*'. There are more variations in female traits and behaviour than the term implies.
3 The centrality of generational distinctions is marked across the archipelago, with older–younger serving as a metaphor for precedence in social relationships (Fox 1989). In the operations performed on symbolic binary classifications, there can be equation of or transformation to older–younger with male–female.
4 There is also a distinction of the degree of relatedness through lateral connections, i.e. 'attention to branches not lineages' (Pelras 1996: 153).
5 Peletz (2001: 432) argues that this idealized role is often in disjuncture with the 'actual, economistically defined role' of husband and father.
6 Idrus contrasts this with more conjugal marriage in Java, which Geertz (1961: 55) describes as the formation of an autonomous household.
7 David Poignand (pers. comm.) told me that the small ceremony where the bride prays in the family shrine to take leave of her ancestors (*mepamit*) before joining her husband's line was the most moving part of Balinese weddings that he attended.
8 van Wouden's arguments were taken up by Lévi-Strauss (1949) and further addressed by Needham (1957). The 'circulating connubium' is also termed 'prescriptive asymmetrical alliance', based on a preference for cross-cousin marriage, between a father's sister's child and a mother's brother's child.
9 In a recent instance, the local government in West Sumatra tried to erase some of women's customary rights in land which is inherited matrilineally through the application of an interpretation of Islamic principles—see Chapter 7.
10 This is so important for the status-conscious Bugis that it is not uncommon for people to make multiple pilgrimages, further demonstrating that they have been blessed by God with good fortune.

## 2 People's Sovereignty, Gender Equity

1 Blackburn (2004: 6) points out that Indonesia, the world's largest Islamic population, is missing from the well-known reviews of Islam, gender and politics (e.g. Kandiyoti 1991b).
2 These goals were especially promoted by the organization Taman Siswa.
3 Women's organizations were associated with many Islamic organizations, including Sarekat Islam (Sarekat Perempuan Islam Indonesia) and Persis (Persistri), but I

have focused on Aisyiyah as the first and because it is still a very important organization.

4 Roehana Koeddoes, also from West Sumatra, published the newspaper *Soenting Melajoe* from 1913 to 1921, which argued for women's emancipation (Burhanudin and Faturahman 2004: 23–8).

5 Member groups included Wanito Utomo; Aisyiyah, Poetri Indonesia; Wanita Katolik; Wanita Mulyo, the women's department of Sarekat Islam (Sarekat Perempuan Islam Indonesia or PSII); the League of Young Muslims; and Wanita Taman Siswa. Blackburn (2004) reports on the critical debates at the women's congress.

6 For example, in his book on the Indonesian nationalist movement, Ingleson (1979: 66) translates '*putra dan putri*' with the non-gender marked term 'youth'.

7 The *taklik talak* or conditional divorce has the husband set out the conditions under which the wife may initiate divorce (see Robinson 2006).

8 See Chapter 5 in Blackburn (2004).

9 The women's demands for a marriage regulation was partially addressed through a 1937 draft ordinance on registered marriages which stipulated monogamy and offered divorce to men and women equally (see Locher-Scholten 2000). However, it did not go any further and the women's groups did not press the issue as they wanted to preserve the unity of the nationalist movement and not alienate Muslim groups. Islamic leaders formed the Indonesian High Islamic Council (MIAI) in 1937 as a reaction to Dutch laws seen to be contrary to Islam, including the draft marriage law (van Bruinessen 1994: 50).

10 Maria Ulfah remarried and took the name of her second husband, Subadio.

11 Carey and Houben (1987) discuss models of femininity in classical Javanese literature.

12 The women's section of the Islamic organization, Masjumi, which had been formed during the Japanese occupation, was established around the same time. While Masjumi played an important role in the politics around independence, it was disbanded in 1960. Not a lot is known about Muslimat Masjumi (Machrusah 2005: 40).

13 The history of women and *pesantren* education is being written by the current generation of *pesantren* graduates (see, for example, Srimulyani 2006).

14 NU had split from Masjumi in 1952.

15 This is also true of books on the PKI, with Hindley (1964) a notable exception.

16 Night work for female workers had been banned in the Netherlands in 1899 and 1919, and by the 1920s when it was debated in the Netherlands East Indies, it was banned in the Netherlands Antilles (Locher-Scholten 1987: 99, n. 2). The initial ban arose from demands by the National Society for Women's Labour, formed following the Women's Labour Exhibition in 1898 (Boissevain 1915: 8–9).

17 This discussion of protection legislation is based on Lahiri-Dutt and Robinson 2008.

18 Perwari was a broad-based (secular and non-politically aligned) independent women's organization with 227 branches, one of the largest and most active in the 1950s (Martyn 2005: 66). Martyn notes that its independent status gave it freedom in its discussions of the range of issues of concern to women, from citizenship to household and family duties.

19 This discussion is based on Robinson (2006).

20 Muslimat women participated in the DPR and the provisional MPR: the role of NU was more significant after the banning of Masjumi in 1960.

### 3 The Gender Order of the New Order

1 She develops her critique of the *kain kebaya* in another essay (Suryakusuma 2004), analysing gender, class and ethnic dimensions of the reclassification of a Javanese elite costume as national dress.

2 The other two were the PDI, another loyal opposition created from secular nationalist parties, and Golongan Karya, or Golkar, the so-called functional groups party, the electoral instrument of the ruling elite. In line with the organicist/familist ideology of the regime, Golkar was initially deemed not a party, but the organic representative of the constituent groups in the national 'family'.
3 Perhaps as a testimony to the thin veneer of New Order 'socialization' of appropriate gender roles, in the post-Suharto era, one of my former students, Professor Nurul Ilmi Idrus (an academic anthropologist) was 'drafted' by popular acclaim to be the new head of DW in her husband's office. The members are delighted with her programme of activities—lectures on contemporary social issues such as reproductive health and drug abuse—which have substituted for the compulsory buying from pyramid selling schemes that her predecessor organized.
4 This section uses some material from Robinson (1989, 1991b).
5 Blackburn further comments that the programme did not arise on the basis of women's demands.
6 Nasaruddin Umar (2004a, b) provides a contemporary analysis of the *fiqh* concerning contraception and abortion.
7 The NU position states that it is permissible if reversible: in 1991 I met doctors in Yogyakarta who had developed a reversible vasectomy technique with high success rates. Their motivation was to overcome religious objections and so make the procedure more accessible through state programmes.
8 Muslimat and Fatayat NU, and Aisyiyah have a territorial structure that links them into local communities. In 2004, Aisyiyah had over 100,000 members in 24 provinces, and Muslimat NU has groups in 14,118 villages (Candland and Nurjanah 2004).
9 See Robinson (2006) and Blackburn (2004) for a fuller discussion of marriage law reform.
10 This is the official motto of the Indonesian nation, but during the New Order era unity was stressed at the expense of diversity. Since Reformasi, there is a new public discourse of tolerance and respect for difference under the rubric of 'pluralism'.

**4 The Gendered Economy**

1 Warouw (2004) analyses the manner in which rural youth were prepared as 'already modern' workers for the new world market factories.
2 Saptari (2000) gives an interesting case study, in which the non-employed household members participate in *arisan* with money contributed by household members with regular income, underscoring the general point made by Silvey and Wolf of the necessary connection between the economic/labour dynamics of households and the ability of women to take up waged employment.
3 Indonesia ratified ILO convention No. 111 on discrimination in employment by sex and race in 1999.
4 Oey-Gardiner (1998) reviews the range of impacts of the crisis on women.
5 This section is based on Robinson (2000a).
6 Robinson (1991a) looks at the historical genesis of domestic service in Indonesia and the way it inflects current practice.
7 The pro-polygamy campaigner Puspo Wardoyo links his support for polygamy to the 'problem' of women labour migrants, discussed in Chapter 7.
8 This is beginning to change in Sulawesi, as described in Silvey's research noted above, and in recent research on Bugis women migrating to Malaysia (see Idrus 2008).
9 Minister of Manpower Regulation No. 1109/1986.
10 As of April 2007, this remains the case (http://ohcr.org/english/law/cedaw.htm, accessed 30 August 2007).

11 For several days there was confusion as to who exactly had been kidnapped, because of the use of false passports.
12 In her view, in general the new law did not provide adequate protection for women and children.

## 5 Globalization of Culture-Sex and Sexuality

1 Dangdut is rhythmic Indian/Arab influenced music, with lyrics of love, jealousy and suffering, performed with 'bumping and grinding' and is very popular, especially in rural areas.
2 This is not to say that women did not support the draft bill criminalizing pornography and *pornoaksi*. Women in radical Islamist groups such as Hizbut Tahrir, and Islamic parties such as PKS and PKB, supported the bill. For the PKB in particular, they were effectively 'wedged' by the radical groups' popular front strategy of linking pornography with issues such as women's dress and public demeanour—only women's behaviour is regulated in the bill.
3 The 1993 GBHN introduced *kodrat* along with the concepts of *harkat* and *martabat* (honour and dignity). In conversation with women officials from the Women's Ministry in 1989, I was amused to hear them confessing that they often confused the latter two terms.
4 Women commented that when they attended official functions in this costume, they would not drink in order to avoid the impossible task of going to the toilet.
5 There were strong protests from Bali on the proposed dress codes in the draft bill criminalizing pornography and *pornoaksi* on the grounds that they would make customary forms of dress illegal, and also that requirements to cover up would negatively impact on tourism.
6 While researching in rural Sulawesi, I am often struck by the contradiction between the affluent, cosmopolitan middle-class lives portrayed on the television and the reality of the lives of those around me, for example, images of young women in scanty swimming costumes are shown in places where women will wear a sarong to bathe in private.
7 The arguments in this section were initially developed in Robinson (1998b).
8 Jennaway (2002) reports a similar relationship between an apparent lack of desire in unmarried women and passion in wives in north Bali. However, her study of Balinese texts implies that Islamic texts give greater recognition to female sexuality.
9 Silvey (2000a) notes that one of the incentives to work in the city mentioned by young factory workers in Makassar is the possibility of avoiding an arranged marriage and marrying for love.
10 In contrast, Abu-Lughod (1990) argues that young Bedouin women resist the partner chosen by parents if the man cannot earn the cash they see as necessary to support a modern lifestyle.
11 While in the 1970s, I witnessed many *nikah* where the bride was not present, and the modern trend (at least in Sulawesi) seems to be for the bride and groom to sit together during the ritual, and even to listen to a homily on wedlock by the officiant.
12 The *duduk bersanding* is rejected by some strict Muslim groups who separate the bride and groom with a *tabir* (curtain) at the reception, and apparently the guests were also segregated when they line up to give good wishes and a gift—so the bride and groom do not have to shake hands with members of the opposite sex who are not *muhrim*.
13 Garza (2005) found a similar phenomenon in the Kalimantan mining community, Sanggata. Young women would migrate there precisely because they desired wage-earning spouses, with cash income, company housing and benefits.

14 This is changing: see Lahiri-Dutt and Robinson (2008) for a study of women moving into work in mine pits.
15 As it posed a threat to their rights to social being and to health campaigns to stem the threat of AIDS, gay-identified Indonesians also protested the draft anti-pornography bill.

**6 Political Challenges to the State Gender Regime**

1 The Badan Kontak Majlis Taklim (BKMT) was set up by the woman *ulama* Tutty Alawiyah in 1981 to coordinate these local groups, which had been in existence since the 1940s. This organization provided a political base for her, and she later served as a member of the MPR and as Women's Minister in 1998–1999 (Burhanudin *et al.* 2004: 101).
2 Muslimat NU and Aisyiyah provided maternal and child health facilities and marriage guidance bureaus for example, and an Islamic organization, Rifka Annisa, set up a well-known women's refuge in Yogyakarta.
3 It is also notable that Indonesia's machinery has always been a ministry, not just an office or section in another department, as is the case in many countries (including Australia).
4 This is down from around 400 per 100,000 births in the early 1990s, but is still among the highest in Southeast Asia (for example Malaysia is 30, Vietnam 95, Philippines 170 according to the UN Human Development Report). Also, this is a national average and in NTT, for example, it is 400+.
5 Dissatisfaction with the achievements of national machineries expressed at the 1985 Nairobi conference led to discussion of 'mainstreaming' in the Platform of Action from the Beijing conference.
6 Yulfita Raharjo is a senior Indonesian researcher who at that time was head of the centre for research on population and manpower issues (PPT) in the Indonesian Academy of Sciences (LIPI).
7 Perhaps because the term '*urusan*' from the verb root *urus* meaning 'to deal with or process something' usually through bureaucratic means (Quinn 2001: 1148) had long been criticized for the implication that women have to be managed.
8 In the late New Order, the term SARA (*suku, agama, ras dan antar golongan*) was coined to describe the categories of forbidden speech.
9 http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/cedaw/indonesia 1998.html
10 See the web site for the UN White Ribbon Day: http://www.whiteribbonday.org.au/
11 Melani Budianta provided me with a transcript of the group interview that she used as a basis for Budianta (2002).
12 In the Suharto period, there were elections involving contestation among three state-sanctioned parties for a limited number of parliamentary seats, the bulk of the seats in the legislature and the electoral college held by military appointees and state appointees representing 'functional groups'.
13 According to figures published by the Ministry for Women's Empowerment, the number of women in these top positions has declined from the numbers published by Oey-Gardiner (2002) (see Chapter 4).
14 The basic law reforms necessary for a democratic transition were laid by Suharto's successor B. J. Habibie in his short term of office through laws reforming the representative bodies (DPR, MPR and DPRD), political parties and elections (Hosen 2003).
15 They had lobbied for Law No. 31/2002 to instantiate a quota for women in party leadership, as such positions are a prime criterion for endorsement as a candidate.
16 This places Indonesia below the average for Asia (16.6 per cent), well below Timor L'Este (27.7 per cent) and only a little above the average for Arab states

(9.0 per cent), although there are no women representatives in some Arab States. Indonesia is in a similar rank to other majority Muslim nations, Malaysia and Turkey (both 9.1 per cent). (International Parliamentary Union: http://www.ipu.org (accessed 23 October 2007).

17 The range is from 0 per cent in North Maluku to 17 per cent in North and Central Sulawesi (Soetjipto 2005: 269).

18 This bill was passed into law under Megawati's presidency, but Gadis Arivia from *Jurnal Perempuan* notes that it was the result of political agitation by women and only agreed to by Megawati because she 'scented/sniffed' (*mencium*) that her popularity was waning relative to her main presidential rival Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, and wanted to court the women's vote (2005: xxxiii).

## 7 Islam and the Politics of Gender

1 This journal of 'Religion and Culture' has been published since 1983 by the Lembaga Studi Agama dan Filsafat (Institute for the Study of Religion and Philosophy), a politically active liberal Islamic organization established by a group of high-profile Islamic and secular scholars. It is a leading journal in the move to what Hefner (2000) terms 'civil Islam'.

2 The name means literally 'yellow books' referring to the colour of the paper of books brought from the Middle East in the early twentieth century (van Bruinessen 1990).

3 Apart from the the Muktamar Alim NU and the Majlis Tarjih of Muhammadijah, the other major body originating *fatwa* in Indonesia is the Majelis Ulama Indonesia (MUI), a semi-official body in that it receives government funds although it is autonomous. It was established by the Suharto government in 1975.

4 This fourth chapter of the Qu'ran deals with 'roles, responsibilities and expected behaviour of Muslim women' (Federspiel 1995: 188).

5 The debate in the congress followed closely on an earlier attack on her Islamic credentials by the Minister for Agriculture in the Habibie cabinet (A. M. Saefuddin) who asserted that she had worshiped in a Hindu temple. (Megawati had attended a Hindu temple when visiting her grandmother's birthplace in Bali.)

6 The hardline Islamic PPP had strongly opposed a woman president, and they won only 58 seats (the largest block of any Islamic party).

7 Other common regulations require prospective civil servants and couples intending marriage to be literate in the Qur'an.

8 Nasaruddin Umar is an advocate of a new Indonesian translation of the Qur'an: he asserts that there are many mistranslations at the basis of gender-biased interpretations. Rahima is an NGO concerned with education and advocacy on women's rights issues, see www.Rahima.org.id.

9 *Tauhid* is commonly used by Muslim advocates of democracy in this vein.

## Conclusion

1 Budianta provided me with a transcript of the discussion (see Budianta 2002). The argument is developed in Sadli (2005).

# Glossary

| | |
|---|---|
| *adat* | Custom, tradition |
| Aisyiyah | Women's organization associated with Muhammadiyah |
| *batik* | Traditional Javanese cloth with motifs coloured in a wax-resist dying method; wrapped skirt of *batik* cloth |
| BKKBN | Badan Koordinasi Keluarga Berencana Nasional (National Family Planning Coordinating Board) |
| Budi Utomo | Noble Endeavour (early nationalist association) |
| CEDAW | Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (UN) |
| *demo susu* | Milk demonstration |
| Dharma Wanita (DW) | Civil Service Wives Association; official women's organization under the New Order |
| DPD | Dewan Perwakilan Daerah (Regional Representative Council) |
| DPR | Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat (People's Representative Council); Indonesia's parliament |
| DPRD | Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah (Regional Representative Council); regional-level parliament |
| Fatayat NU | Young women's organization associated with the NU |
| *fatwa* | Opinion on a point of Islamic law or dogma given by a person with recognized authority |
| *feodal* | Pertaining to customs of former unequal and repressive societies |
| GBHN | Garis-garis Besar Haluan Negara (Broad Guidelines on State Policy) |
| GDP | Gross domestic product |

| | |
|---|---|
| Guided Democracy | Regime of President Sukarno, 1957–65 |
| Gerwani | Gerakan Wanita Indonesia: mass women's organization affiliated to the PKI |
| Golkar | Golongan Karya (Functional Groups), state political party under the New Order, and one of the major post-New Order parties. |
| *hadith* | Reports of the words and actions of the Prophet, regarded as a second scripture in Islam, ancillary to the Qur'an |
| Hari Ibu | Mothers' Day (national holiday) |
| Hari Kartini | Kartini Day (national holiday) |
| *ibu* | Mother |
| ICPD | International Conference on Population and Development 1994 (UN sponsored international conference) |
| ILO | International Labour Organization |
| IMSA | Indonesia Manpower Suppliers' Association |
| Isteri Sedar (IS) | Aware Women |
| Institut Teknologi Bangung (ITB) | Bandung Institute of Technology |
| IUD | Intra-uterine device |
| *jilbab* | 'Tight veil': head covering for Muslim women consisting of a headscarf pinned tightly under the chin and covering the neck and shoulders, leaving only the face exposed (in contrast to the loose veil or *kerudung*) |
| *kain* | Literally 'cloth', but used to refer to wrapped *batik* skirt worn with a *kebaya* as national dress |
| *kanca wingking* | 'friend behind'; wife (Javanese term) |
| *kebaya* | long-sleeved woman's blouse; worn customarily with a wrapped *batik* skirt |
| Keluarga Berencana | Family Planning (official government programme) |
| *kemitrasejajaran pria dan wanita* | Harmonious gender partnership of men and women |
| KH | Kiai Haji, title used for a religious leader (*kiai*) who has completed the pilgrimage to Mecca |

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|---|---|
| *kiai* | Title borne by a very learned Muslim, especially one who heads a religious school or who is revered as an *ulama* (religious scholar and teacher) |
| *kodrat* | One's inherent nature, biological determination |
| Komnas Perempuan | National Commission on Violence Against Women |
| Kompilasi Hukum Islam (KHI) | Compilation of Indonesian Islamic Law |
| Konstituante | Constitutional Assembly (the body responsible for reviewing the Constitution) |
| Kowani | Kongres Wanita Indonesia (Indonesia Women's Congress); national federation of women's organizations |
| KPI | Koalisi Perempuan Indonesia untuk Keadilan dan Demokrasi (Coalition of Indonesian Women for Justice and Democracy) |
| KPU | Komisi Pemilihan Umum (General Elections Commission; Electoral Commission) |
| *krismon* | The Indonesian monetary crisis |
| KUII | Kongres Umat Islam Indonesia (Congress of the Indonesian Community of Believers) |
| LBH APIK | Legal aid organization |
| Majlis Tarjih | Council of Consideration; assembly for decisions on Islamic law |
| *maksiat* | Sinful behaviour/immoral act |
| *madzhab* | School of jurisprudence |
| MENUPW | Menteri Urusan Peranan Wanita (Women's Affairs Minister), relabelled as MENPERTA (Menteri Peranan Wanita) |
| MENPERTA | Menteri Peranan Wanita (Ministry for Women's Roles) |
| Menteri Pemberdayaan Perempuan | Ministry for Women's Empowerment |
| *merantau* | Outmigration, traditionally sojourning |
| MPR | Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat (People's Consultative Assembly); Indonesia's supreme decision-making body |
| Muhammadiyah | Modernist wing of Indonesian Islam |
| *muhrim* | Non-marriageable close kin |

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| MUI | Majelis Ulama Indonesia (Indonesian Council of Religious Scholars) |
| Muslimat NU (MNU) | Women's organization associated with the NU |
| NEI | Netherlands East Indies |
| New Order | Regime of President Sukarto, 1966–98 |
| NGO | Non-government organization |
| *nikah* (*akad nikah*) | Marriage contract |
| NU | Nahdlatul Ulama (Revival of the Religious Scholars); Indonesia's largest Islamic organization |
| PDI | Partai Demokrasi Indonesia (Indonesian Democratic Party) |
| PDI-P | Partai Demokrasi Indonesia-Perjuangan (Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle) |
| *pembangunan* | Development |
| PAN | Partai Amanat Nasional (National Mandate Party) |
| PBB | Partai Bulan Bintang (Moon and Star Party) |
| *pembinaan* | Guidance |
| *pemberdayaan* | Empowerment |
| *perda* | Local/regional regulations (*peraturan daerah*) |
| *perda SI* | Local regulations purportedly based on Syariah Islam |
| *perempuan* | Woman |
| *pesantren* | Islamic residential school |
| *pingitan* | Caging, stabling |
| PKB | Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa (National Awakening Party); associated with NU |
| PKI | Partai Komunis Indonesia (Communist Party of Indonesia) |
| PKK | Pembinaan Kesejahteraan Keluarga (Family Welfare Movement), renamed in 1999 as Pemberdayaan Kesejahteraan Keluarga (Family Welfare Empowerment Movement) |
| *posyandu* | Pos Pelayanan Terpadu (Integrated Health Post); health service stations for mothers and children |

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| PPP | Partai Persatuan Pembangunan (United Development Party) |
| Reformasi | The name for the political era following the fall of the Suharto regime |
| *santri* | Pious/observant Muslim |
| SIP | Suara Ibu Peduli (Voice of Concerned Mothers) |
| SP | Solidaritas Perempuan (Women's Solidarity for Human Rights) |
| *taklik talak* | Conditional divorce in the marriage contact |
| Taman Siswa (TS) | Early nationalist organization |
| *tanah ulayat* | Uncultivated land (common property) |
| Tim P2W | Tim Peningkatan Peranan Wanita (Team to Advance the Status of Women, or Women in Development Management Team) |
| UGM | Universitas Gadjah Mada (Gadjah Mada University) |
| UI | University of Indonesia |
| UU | Undang-Undang (law) |
| *wanita* | Woman |
| *sembako* | Basic commodities |
| WID | Women in development |

A note on spelling: there are frequently several alternative Indonesian spellings for words from Arabic or from regional languages. I have used the official dictionary, the *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia* (Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan 1995) to resolve differences.

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**Kathryn Robinson** is Professor in the Department of Anthropology, Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies at The Australian National University. She is editor of *The Asia Pacific Journal of Anthropology*. Her research interests focus on women's social participation in Indonesia, including women's political activism, Islam and international female labour migration.

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